

CLASSIC MUSIC NEVER GETS OLD

DOWN THE LINE



DIME STORE ZOMBIES

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR BAND IS EATEN BY THE UNDEAD?

SAMMY HORNER
MATTHEW HUNT
BRAM COOLS
UNDER MIDNIGHT

ADAM AGAIN
ADEL MEISENHEIMER
GLENN PEOPLES
2013 STAFF PICKS

ISSUE 16 MARCH 2014
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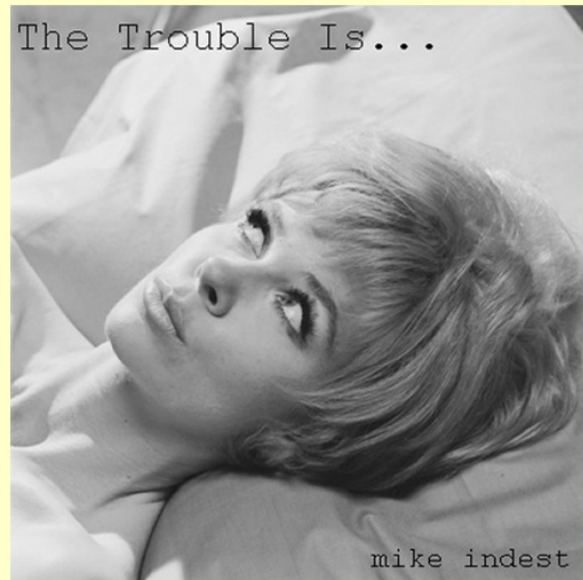
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ACTION SPOTLIGHT

DON'T JUST COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WORLD... DO SOMETHING TO CHANGE IT

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(Freedom Firm did not buy this ad nor do they endorse this magazine – just givin' ya food for thought)

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COMING SOON

This month we were lucky to have a wide range of people contributing to the magazine. We really do look at this venture as a collective. We welcome input and articles from our friends and fans. We will even run older stories that were never published in the past.

In the future, look for the first musical issue from the Down The Line Collective as The Basement Tapes compilation is nearing the final stages of completion. If you have been listening to the Basement Tapes podcast, then you know what kind of great music to expect from that. Stay tuned for more details on that release as the date moves closer.

<http://downthelinezine.com>

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DOWN THE LINE

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WRITE US Letters and comments need to contain your full name. All submissions become property of Down the Line E-zine and may be edited or condensed. Or even printed out and framed if you really kiss our... um... never mind....

VISION:

Down the Line covers bands that explored the intersection between faith and art in the 1980s through the early 1990s - even though they were probably never accepted in to what is called "Contemporary Christian Music" because they were too edgy or alternative or liberal or for whatever reason. Some of these bands may still be making music today, and others may have moved on. We cover these bands (active or dormant) as well as any new projects by former members of these bands and any new bands that may have the same spirit as these bands.

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LATE BREAKING NEWS

Terry Taylor and Rob Watson to Write Music For Veggie Tales

Yes, you read that right. Netflix is going to revive Veggie Tales, with Terry Taylor and Rob Watson writing new music. There aren't many more details than that, but anyone that knows Taylor's work with the Neverhood Project and whole host of other video games knows that this is good news.

Retroactive Releases

Retroactive Records has just licensed Sacramento – *Testimony of Apocalypse & Haunts of Violence* from the company that now owns R.E.X. Records. Look for quality remastered reissues in 2014.

Also, just released from the vaults is Bride – *Into the Matrix*. The songs that appear on this disc are from the recordings of *PG-13* & *Monkey See, Monkey Do*. Both were cassette only releases. Some of these tracks would go on to be re-recorded and used on future Bride releases. These are the original tracks, as recorded by Matrix in 1983 and 1984. This 2014 Retroactive Records reissue comes in a full color 4-panel digipak, completely remastered by the ultimate mastering guru, J Powell at Steinhaus. Never before have these songs been heard with the warmth, depth, and sheer grit that now exudes off of this top notch classic reissue. Long out of print, Retroactive went the extra mile by providing superb artwork to go with this long out of print reissue.

77s to Release More "Miserable Than You'll Ever Be" Special Edition

From Dr. Love: "It's early afternoon here in Georgia, and Chris (Taylor) and I are hitting the road for our first performance tonight at the Feed & Seed near Asheville NC. We're looking forward to the next few weeks together, and hope we get to see each and every one of you during our tour. For the full listing of tour dates, check michaelroe.com/shows.html. You can select any date to get full details on each performance.

Chris and I will be touring in support of my new re-release, "More Miserable Than You'll Ever Be"... Initially I had planned on opening up

pre-orders today, but that isn't going to happen as planned. Call it a delay of gratification, but the pre-order for the 2 disc remastered and expanded "More Miserable Than You'll Ever Be" has been postponed until next Tuesday, March 25th. But as promised, you can still buy the CD from your good pal Doc Love on the tour that starts today ~ and fear not ~ if you end up wanting to get all the online bonus extras, you'll still be able to pre-order those next week without having to buy the CD twice! That's right folks, the good Doctor loves each and every one of you.

The album was lovingly restored and remastered by myself, Mark Harmon, and Scott Reams from many of the original master tapes, and all of the bonus material is all previously unreleased and features myself and members of the 77s from the late 80s era of the band. I can't wait for you all to get a chance to hear this album, because until you have this version, you haven't really heard "More Miserable Than You'll Ever Be"...

And remember, be sure to check michaelroe.com/shows.html for showtimes near you on my 22 date tour with Chris Taylor starting today!

See you on the road...

Michael Roe"

Have any other questions, comments, theological musings, etc? We would love to hear them – come be our friend on FaceBook or comment on our blog. We also do that Twitter thing occasionally.



Deni Gauthier's "Quiet Town"

Deni's newest release, recorded in an old school house north of Huntsville ON with industry great producer/engineer Andre Wahl, is his most anticipated collection of songs to date. The official London ON CD release party will be held at the London Music Club on Friday March 30th at 8:00. You can pre-order CDs and limited edition vinyl from denigauthier.bandcamp.com.

LIV. to Release Debut Album

OnTheAttack Records announces the debut album by LIV., called "Be The Change", will be released March 18, 2014. Hardcore that embodies the love, the passion, the sorrow, the anger, the pain, the struggle, and the promise of life. [facebook.com/ontheattack](https://www.facebook.com/ontheattack)

New Music From Bill Mallonee

Dover Beach is the name of the next full band album from Bill Mallonee. You can currently pre-order CD, digital, and vinyl copies of the album through Bill's BandCamp. Yes, you did read that right. Vinyl. Other recent releases to look for: *Little Births*"/The "Dolorosa" demos, *Starlight O'er High Desert*, *Dolorosa*, *Future Hymns for the new Idolatry*, and *Town Hall*. Mr. Mallonee has been busy lately...

Dan Zimmerman Dreams Of Earth

Zimmerman's latest offering, *Dreams of Earth*, is the kind of work that exists only by a half-century spent listening and crafting songs. This kind of time ingrains in a man an understanding of how stories are told, of when to cut to the chase and when to linger on a word or a breath. His vision is one of clear-eyed reckoning with a broken world, tempered by the patient assurance that all will be well, as if to say "Be of good cheer. Wait with me..."

Remembering Gene Eugene

Brainstorm Artists Int'l, in partnership with Meis Music Group, is pleased to announce the release of *Remembering Gene Eugene*, a thoughtful look at the life and music of former member of Adam Again and The Lost Dogs, as told by his friends and peers. Testimonies surround solo recordings of 3 cover songs, the last ones Gene made. *Remembering Gene Eugene* is available on iTunes, Amazon MP3 and other digital stores.

The Radiant Dregs Release Wire

Down the Line Collective artists The Radiant Dregs have released their brand new full length album, *Wire*. You can listen to the new album or download for free at their BandCamp site. Or if you are a registered user of BandCamp and pay for the album, you can listen to it anywhere you want through the BandCamp app. So check out the tunes and support independent music!

Ambassadors of Shalom Release Debut

Ambassadors of Shalom announce the release of their debut album *Abdicate Self*. Thirteen songs of blistering English street punk with a message of Hope for the downtrodden. CDs are available at thumperpunkrecords.storenvy.com.

Mark Robertson New Band Prayer Flags

Mark Robertson should be a name that is well known to readers of this magazine, but if not he has been involved with Under Midnight, The Stand Altar Boys, Brighton, This Train, Ragamuffin Band, and the Legendary Shack Shakers among others. He is now in a new band called Prayer Flags that he describes as "noisy poppy post punk." Joining him are Harlowe Quinn, David Burns, and Paul Niehaus. Check out the bands [new Facebook page](#) for updates and a couple of new songs.

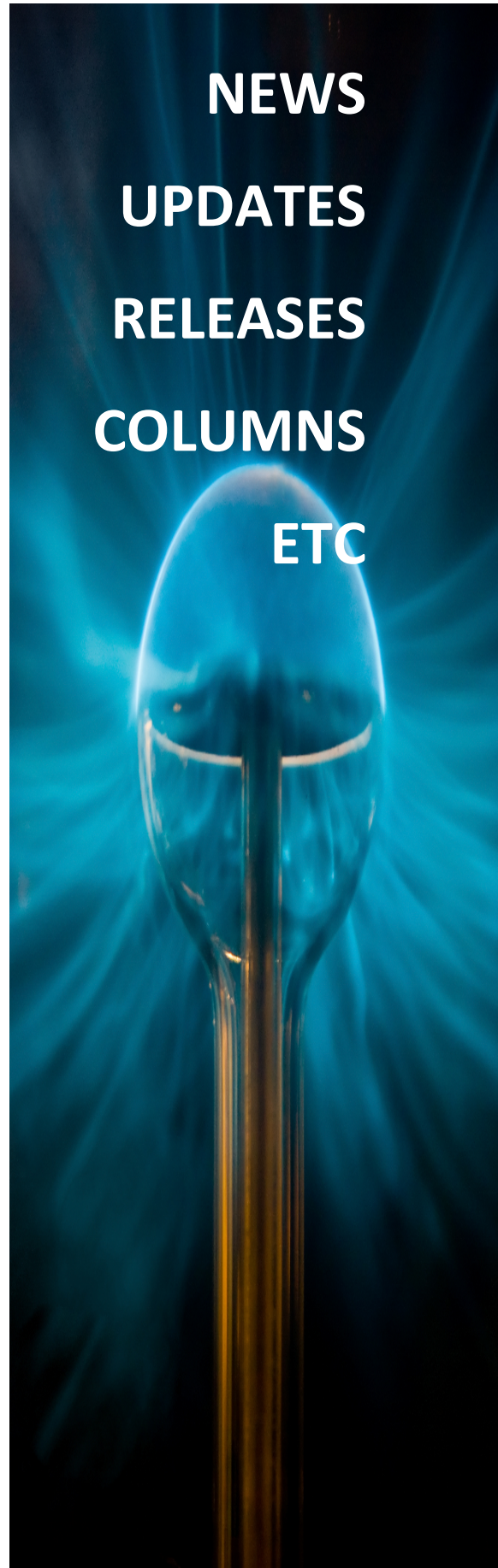
Upcoming Roxx Records Releases

- Ultimatum – *Heart of Metal* vinyl – Side A will contain the new tracks and Side B the re-mastered *Into The Pit*.
- Deliverance – *Weapons of Our Warfare* re-mastered for vinyl
- Taker Anthology – collection of all of their classic songs
- Re-issues of *Stay of Execution* by Deliverance and *Released Upon the Earth* by Vengeance Rising

Riki Michele's New Music Project

Riki Michele recently sent out this update: "I'm also happy to announce that I'm getting ready to head into the studio to start a new project with my friend and musical wizard, Ric Hordinski. You might be familiar with Ric as the original guitar player for Over The Rhine, or for his own amazing solo music under the name of MONK, or producing artists like David Wilcox. I can't wait to work with him as a collaborator and producer, and I hope that you'll come along for the ride with us this year."

NEWS
UPDATES
RELEASES
COLUMNS
ETC





This was so good I had to pass it along...

~Get Ready Because The Storm is Coming: PT:1~

~Peace and much respect, I know allot of y'all out there are struggling to make sense of what is going on in the world right now. Many changes are indeed taking place that are beyond our comprehension. From the poisoning of Earth's land, air and water, to the ever increasing threat of martial law and police states. Chemtrails have replaced clouds, cyberspace has surpassed community and chemical bio-products have replaced nutrition. Corporate industry is pillaging every conceivable resource of this planet, including you.

Our children are told to idolize the celebrity, no matter how talentless, whitless, or offensive they behave. And when these same celebrities go too far, we are encouraged to slander, make fun and hate them for a number of acceptable reasons. All the while the war machine keeps turning day and night.

Spirituality is now measured by how much material wealth one has "attracted" into their life, and revolution has been replaced by skinny jeans and apathy. Video games now recruit our bravest warriors at young ages when they are most venerable, virtually turning them into wards of the state or military.

Our every move is under surveillance as privacy has become a condition of the past. Our fellow citizens have been killed in movie theaters, restaurants, schools and shopping malls, by "lone" gun men, creating a mass public shadow of fear wherever we are. And this is just a small sample of what all of us know and feel on a daily basis.

For those of us who have been "fighting the good fight" for most of our lives, it feels like enough is enough. We know too well that most if not every attempt to unify and organize is quickly put to rest, not by the oppressor, but by our own disorganization, pride and prejudice. We can list off every excuse in the book for this condition, yet at the end of the day, the common denominator for our current situation as humanity is OURSELVES. We choose not to get along, our own community tears down our prophets, teachers and leaders. Do we even know who we are anymore? Can we truly say we are descendants of the great civilizations in the past while we continue to create and live in the paradigm of the colonizer? Are we even afraid to THINK like free men and women, or is the NWO policing our inner being as well?

For those of you still sleeping in or pretending to be asleep, you gotta get yourself up. It's go time. If you've been playing the role of "reluctant messenger" now is the time to grow into your adulthood. Now is the time to become the men and women that we truly know ourselves to be. No one escapes the coming tribulation, including the so called elite.

To be continued.....

~Minista Zin Uru~

Charlie Peacock's Improvisational Jazz

"Lemonade – pianist, composer, record producer and [Grammy Award Winner](#) Charlie Peacock's collection of twelve solo piano improvisations is an unexpected, yet winsome next musical step after his much-admired 2012 Folk-Americana release, *No Man's Land*. Paste Magazine's Holly Gleason proclaimed *No Man's Land* "a cocktail of Dust Bowl feels, Cajun beats and shuffles, raw banjos and fiddles, steel guitars that pool, and spacious arrangements. This is music of red dirt and high humidity, different worlds that share the same sort of soul." [You can read the rest of the Press release here](#), as well as find links to purchase this digital-only album.

Jagged Doctrine Returns

Everyone's favorite industrial / metal / electronic outfit Jagged Doctrine has returned with a new album. *Electrocuted* can be found at [Bandcamp](#), Amazon, iTunes, and other fine (or not-so-fine depending on your view) digital outlets. Self-described by members of the band as more electronic and not quite as guitar-oriented, an initial listen still reveals a lot to rock out with.

Easter Teeth Releases New CD

Starting in 2009, Josh (vocals and drums) and Tim (vocals, bass, keys, and gadgets) set out to convince the world that their two musical loves, Soul and Hardcore, indeed belong together. The new CD contains 5 new tracks fresh from the studio, as wells 4 tracks previously released as an ep entitled *Break Out the Knives*. Since the band doesn't always have the horn section with them live, both the CD and Digital download contain a version with horns and a version without. 18 songs total! The CD can be ordered from:

veritasvinyl.storenvy.com

Chris Taylor Releases Travelers Hotel

"Just before I passed by the Travelers Hotel sign here in downtown San Antonio... I was telling myself that I don't want to write and record songs anymore. It just seemed silly. I have so many records for you to pick and choose from... so why do you need one more? Then, I saw the sign: Travelers Hotel. By the time I got to the car, I had all these characters in my head... these sounds and ideas of sounds. I knew I had to start recording and writing.... This album is officially 12 songs – ending with Forgiveness. But for the digital version

I've included 3 Bonus Tracks for you as well! The original 12 songs clock in at 1 hour and 1 minute.... so you are definitely getting the grand tour of [Travelers Hotel](#)."

Fleming & John Record New Song

Fleming & John were recently featured on an episode of Find the Beauty: "Find the Beauty challenges bands and musicians to revisit hit songs of the past and resuscitate them for modern ears. In this episode, Mr. Lindsay Jamieson brings the duo known as Fleming and John the task of finding the beauty in the 1977 top 20 hit by Joy Sarney called "Naughty, Naughty, Naughty." Let us know at the end of the video if they found the beauty!" [You can purchase the new song by Fleming & John through iTunes.](#)

Wicked's End Documentary

Glenn Rowlands investigates how the Christian metal band, Wicked's End, happened and also how it also seemingly disintegrated. You can watch [The Whirlwind](#) documentary entirely online or order a physical copy from the link on the YouTube page.

And How Releases Inchworm

Sean Severson, also known as And How, has released a new, free, [full-length collection of songs](#) for your listening enjoyment. "These songs were each written late night, every Friday, after work, during "Eastenders" and recorded the following Wednesday evening for 10 weeks straight. This was one of those projects that you find yourself finished with before you really realized that you were working on it. I love that! I hope you do as well. I think this was a good way to end 2013. Wear your favorite pair of headphones and listen at a pleasant volume. – Cheers"

Steve Taylor & The Perfect Foil

"Twenty years after Steve Taylor's last studio album, he's taking a sabbatical from filmmaking to record all new music with a new band." [Read more at the official Kickstarter page](#) and be sure to catch the hilarious promo video. The album was successfully funded – so much that they were also able to fund a national tour. If you weren't one of the backers, be sure to catch the new album and tour in the near future.

[continued on page 29]



The Shocking Revelation of Real Love

Sometimes, I wonder what it would have been like to be around when Jesus messed with people's heads.

When Jesus pointed at the crowd and said "he that is without sin, cast the first stone"... that was not a normal event. It probably didn't happen in any way like we have seen it portrayed in any movie so far. I image that some people almost feel over with mouths wide open. There were probably several audible gasps. People were probably acting like a freaking UFO landed in front of them.

Because that was how foreign the whole thing really was. It wasn't just a new idea. It was a paradigm-altering, WTF?!?!, never seen this before, holy hell in a hand basket Batman kind of moment.

People met face to face with a shocking revelation of real love.

Yes, they could have stoned the woman to death. Jesus could have at least lashed into her in the same way He had lashed into the concept of adultery on other occasions. But he didn't. We see that again and again in the scriptures. Jesus could have taken the commonly accepted road, but he pulled out his most shocking trick in His deck of tricks. Real love.

People probably felt like He had reached over and shattered their world with one small touch.

Sure, Jesus argued with people a lot. People who that say Jesus never got into religious or political arguments obviously skip large swaths of the Bible. But when people's lives were on the line? When hurting people were really asking for help? He ignored religion and politics and did a shocking thing: He loved.

[Taken from [Ecclesia Extraneus](#)]

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR BAND IS
EATEN BY THE UNDEAD?**





DIME STORE ZOMBIES



Interview by Matt Crosslin

You guys look a little familiar. Haven't I seen you in another band or something?

We have been telling our followers that SLIDE was eaten by zombies. Following the aftermath, we arose from the dead as Dime Store Zombies. But for the sake of branding and standing out in search engines, we made an informed decision to change the band name SLIDE to Dime Store Zombies. Even though we owned the trademark on the name "SLIDE", we found that there were four other bands named SLIDE worldwide. The name SLIDE became a search engine and internet storefront nightmare. Our listeners were confused as to where to find and identify us. Try googling SLIDE and you will see what we mean. It was a great learning experience in that you need to make your band name as unique as possible, otherwise you can get lost real quick in cyberspace. Lesson learned.

Dime Store Zombies seems to be a very unusual name. Where did that come from?

The name was taken from two of our tracks: Political Zombie and Dime Store Queer. On a personal level, the name DSZ is a subtle "nod" to James' father who was a CEO for J.J. Newberry's (one of the original Dime Stores back in the day.) James' father worked closely with Meshulam Riklis who was formally married to singer/actress Pia Zadora. Riklis owned J.J. Newberrys/McCrory company which consisted of multiple retail Five and Dime stores. Sadly, James' father passed away of cancer at the young age of 54. However, on a broader level, I think you might say the

name DSZ can be viewed as social commentary regarding consumerism and how it is played out in our culture today.

I see a few familiar titles on the new CD and a few new ones. How do you feel the newer ones stack up to the older ones? Are the older songs re-recorded/remixed/rearranged in any ways?

The older songs were completely re-recorded and remixed from the ground up. We modernized some of the older tracks with new instrumentation (ie: mandolins, accordions, trumpet, acoustic guitar). Vocal melodies were changed in some of the older tracks as well and new lyrics were added in various places. For example, the track "Auto Tune Massacre" had a major facelift. So did "January" where we added a banjo and changed the melody line and lyrics in the chorus. Perhaps the biggest change occurred with our track "Faceless". It sounds nothing like SLIDE's version of Faceless. We view "Faceless" as a completely brand new track. We love the real trumpet that was utilized in that track. It's interesting putting the older SLIDE tracks side by side with the re-vamped DSZ tracks. Obviously, we are much more happier with the DSZ versions, and that's the versions you will hear at our live shows. As far as the newer tracks are concerned, I think we matured in our song writing. We gravitated toward adding additional instruments and really emphasized layering background vocal melodies as well. It's not just a cheap re-hash of older material. The listener really is getting a brand new listening experience. There are five new tracks, and six older tracks. Each of the older tracks went through some major structural changes. As a result, everything was re-recorded, and we even worked with a fantastic new engineer in a new studio.



I believe that I heard some different instruments on a few tracks? How did your sound expand or change with the name change?

We brought in some guest musicians on a few of the tracks. As our song writing matured, we felt it was necessary. Plus, we love collaborating with other musicians who play other kinds of instrumentation. It also served an additional purpose in that it helped to differentiate our DSZ sound from that of SLIDE. It's safe to say we will continue doing this kind of writing with any future material.

Tell us a bit about the new video, "Political Zombies." What was it like creating that video? I believe there are a few more coming soon correct?

Creating the video of Political Zombie was a fantastic experience. James Preston sought out input from the entire band and proceeded to story board the entire video. We approached the video with the idea of a political satire in mind complete with zombie Presidents and showcasing back room deals. We also wanted to infuse humor into the video. We think we succeeded in making a great 1st video. The response has been terrific. People tell us all the time that they can't help but laugh when they see some of the things we did with the story line. We also plan to release a "making of- behind the scenes" for the Political Zombie video. We had one scary moment when we were shooting the scene of drummer Mike Baker inside the shopping cart. James was pushing him in the shopping cart across stage and the cart went over the edge with Mike in it. Luckily, he escaped with only a few cuts and bruises. We also have 2

additional videos on deck. Next up will be an all animated music video for "Faceless" which pokes fun of personal drama that can occur as a result of using Facebook. Very funny stuff. That should release in late Sept. of 2013. After that, the band will travel to Telluride, Colorado where we will shoot "San Juan Skyway" at an elevation of about 9500 feet.

Is the horror/zombie theme (song titles, lyrics, intro to "fangs", etc) intentional because of the name change, or something that just happened?

Yes, the horror/zombie theme is intentional and it does have something to do with the name change. However, not everything we write has or will have horror themes attached to it. San Juan Skyway and Fallen Angel are examples of non-horror themed songs. The track "Fangs" would still have been recorded even if we had kept the name SLIDE. Some of the most famous songs ever written have come about from personal horrific experiences. In other words, horror in and of itself can be very subjective. For example, sad songs are usually written out of personal tragedy of some kind. What's interesting is how society and the media around us is so focused on apocalyptic themes. TV shows, movies, and the country's current mood seem to be wrapped around these kinds of themes. By the way, we are not on a mission to glorify tragedy or end time themes. But I do think you can write songs within the context of certain themes with the goal of maintaining some kind of relevancy. And I promise, we are the happiest goofballs you could ever meet. Come hang with us sometime and we'll take you to Disneyland for the day lol.

Why write so much about relational problems and the problems that occur on social media?

Because I believe that a lot of people (not everyone) who are on a spiritual quest have some degree of unresolved issues. Issues they are afraid to deal with on a spiritual and personal level. And as a result of not being honest with themselves (or to their higher authority) they end up becoming judgmental and unforgiving to others who might not share the same beliefs. Look, we are all human. Broken, and hopefully striving to be noble responsible people. But we need to put down our i-phones and start talking in real time to each other. People need to be heard. And yes, we need more tactile stimulation. People want us to listen to them, but we have become so self-absorbed. Perhaps DSZ writes about relational and social media problems as a way to get people to think, especially if the subject matter is uncomfortable or questionable. We are also quite aware that not all people are going to agree with everything we have to say. And were ok with that.

So to the fan that is listening to your lyrics and thinks “I need to change how I treat people” – what would you recommend? Or if they are facing this kind of treatment – how can they deal with it?

Start by being honest with yourself. Do a self-inventory. Ask others who are close to you to identify your strengths and weaknesses. Look it over, review it with someone you trust. Maybe start to meet one on one with a person you respect as a way of making those positive changes for yourself. Who we choose to spend the majority of our time with influences who we become. Make a choice to spend the majority of your time surrounded by people who bring value to your life. And don't forget to pass the torch and become a role model for someone who may be in need of

the same thing.

What can we expect from Dime Store Zombies in the future?

We do feel like we finally found our footing in terms of style, but there is always room for steady growth. We continually strive to do our best. We would love to tour outside our home turf of California. Hopefully you will see more releases and more videos from us. The music market is overly saturated these days, so it makes it especially difficult to break through certain barriers. We do appreciate people's emails and love to hear from those who have followed us over the years.

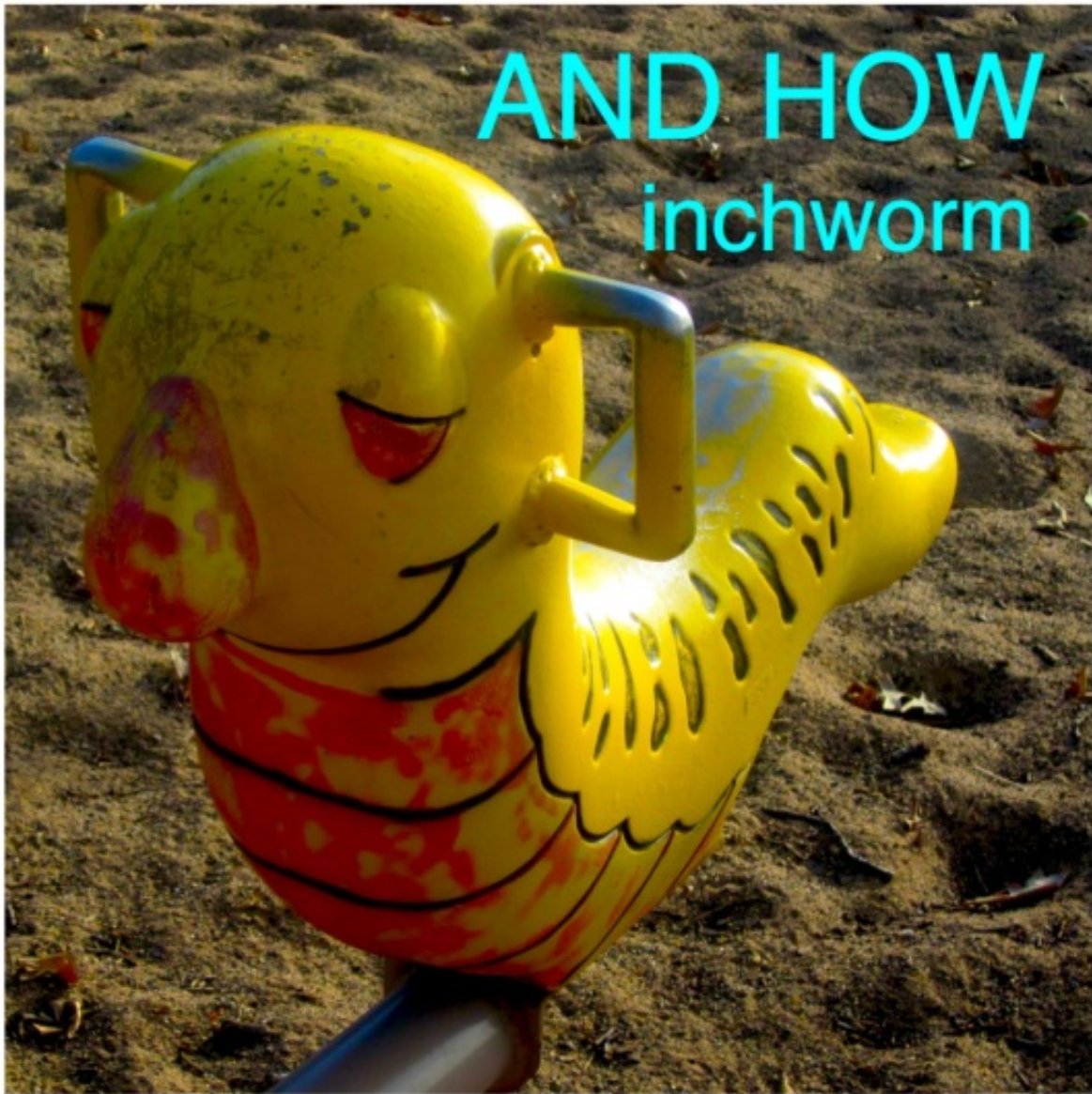


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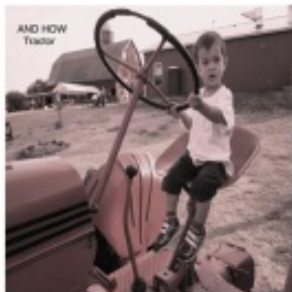


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picture by John Daley

SAMMY HORNER

interview with Joshua Lory

Sammy Horner has been in the game nearly 30 years now. His musical stylings are wide and varied from Celtic to Americana to Outlaw Country to Punk Rock to Modern Rock; all of which he seamlessly blends together throughout his large catalog of over 25 albums. His name can easily be mentioned in the same breath as Knott, Mallonee, Taylor, and Roe, as the lyrics, music, and artistry are of that quality. I first became aware of Horner through our mutual friend Masaki Liu as he was about to fly to Scotland to record The Electrics first release on 5 Minute Walk Records. I was a huge fan of the Pogues and was thrilled to hear another band in that vein of that music without sounding like the aforementioned group. I had the pleasure of opening for The Electrics during a short stint I had on bass playing for Masaki's band Rivulets and Violets, another 5 Minute Walk

band. I lost track of Horner somewhere around 1998 and later rediscovered his work around 2005 and was pleased to find an abundance of back catalog and newer releases from Sammy through his websites. He now has a BandCamp page with all of his releases, including rare Electrics albums, all for quality downloads.

Sammy and wife Kylie have formed a new group called the Sweet Sorrows in the realm of Plant and Krauss, Harris and Knopfler, and Bill Mallonee and Muriah Rose. A great blend of male/female vocals over acoustic based Folk with hints of Celtic and Country. Hands down one of my favorite releases of 2013, I recommend you get it ASAP!

I knew little about Horner aside from his music and high praise from our many mutual friends. So join me as I get to know the man, the myth, the legend, Sammy Horner.

Where did you grow up?

Born and raised in Belfast Northern Ireland.

Were you raised going to church or did you become a believer later?

Well it was cultural in Ireland for parents to send their kids to Church.. Sunday school, scouts and stuff f like that, but my family didn't really go to church... they just kinda had a cultural relationship with it. Ireland is a deeply religious country so I was certainly exposed to certain religious views my whole life. I came to faith, at least as I understand it, at about 16 years old.

What first inspired you to want to play music? How old were you when you started?

My dad played lap steel guitar and loved country music. There was always music in our house, and parties always included people singing. My father wanted me to play but of course, I refused to go to lessons. I hated music at school...the subject was dull, tedious and badly taught. Oddly, even as a kid, I could always pick out the bass lines of songs. I bought my first bass guitar in a bomb damage sale (yes, I said bomb damage). The IRA had blown the local music shop to bits the very day I decided to buy a bass. I arrived shortly after the fire service had put the fire out, walked through the window and asked the guy for a bass.....he gave me a bass, a chord and a strap for 29 UK pounds...I had no idea how to play it. I was 16 years old.

What was your first instrument?

A Kay bass guitar ...basically a copy of a gibson EB4 SG style.

Is bass your weapon of choice (it's mine for sure)? I learned to play to Dee Dee and CJ Ramone and Kim Deal from the Pixies bass lines when I started. Who are some of your favorite bass players?

It is indeed. I love bass and have a decent collection. I have made some stupid choices, like swapping a Rickenbacker 3000 for a Mando guitar and selling an original Hagstrom for \$150...but ain't that the way of it! I love lots of bass players who are so much better than me. I love how Lemmy from Motorhead kinda plays a rhythm guitar and bass style on his Ricky... Love Mark Robertson... he really is great. Mark King rocked but all the slapping left me a bit cold in the end. Nick Beggs was great and became one of the main guys with a Chapman Stick. Steve Lawson is a solo bassist from the UK... he is amazing... he once told me I was an early influence of his, which was nice, but I am guessing it was when he couldn't play a note! For me... nothing beats a Fender P bass... it's simple and always delivers, (at least for what I wanted). I still own two of them but have had a bunch over the years... but I still have my 1975 USA P bass... white, with black scratch plate and rosewood neck... but I have a Mexican made one that I used for touring... airlines are bad to guitars... lost my jazz bass to thieves and swapped my P Bass special (slimmer fast action neck, active and with more pick-ups) for a Musicman Stingray, which I sold 'cause it was too heavy. Right now I own about 10 basses.... mainly for studio work for different sounds You know, five strings, eight strings, acoustic, fretless and so on....

I honestly can't imagine what it must have been like growing up

around organizations like the IRA. We have a lot of shootings in the states, but when a bomb goes off it's treated as if the world is ending. How does that weigh on you growing up with the possibility of being caught in the crossfire when the actions happen? I would be stressed.

It stresses you for sure. It all began to happen when I was about 10 years old. The tension weighed heavy on me. I had my first nervous breakdown at the age of 11. I was hospitalized and woke up after being unconscious for 3 days. My parents thought I was going to die, and after many tests, the doctors misdiagnosed my blackout as epilepsy. They medicated me for four years and for some reason put me thru Electro shock treatment. Turned out it was stress.... but I ended up misusing the meds and in the end I was worse off than before. It's weird tho... I remember nights when I would wish shooting / bombing would stop just so I could get to sleep. It is odd how quickly people adapt to what is happening around them... you either choose to get on with life of never leave your home. I honestly believe both faith and music helped me a lot... once I got that first bass, I got myself in a band within 3 months and hit the road in Ireland. It changed everything for me.

Do bombings still happen like the one in the music shop?

Bombings are less frequent now days, things are better, but it still ain't over

I always feel that high school is the time when our taste in music really starts to develop, who were your favorite bands back then?

I agree... although I hated school and left as soon as I could. I was raised on great country music that my dad loved. I still love Patsy Cline, Les Paul, Ernie Ford and Jim Reeves. My sisters loved Elvis and Cliff Richard and lots of the old school rock n' roll, and of course the Beatles but I was lucky to be exposed to the likes of Van Morrison, Leonard Cohen and Rory Gallagher. Glam rock got BIG back then. I loved it in my teens... mainly British bands like The Sweet, Slade, Alvin Stardust, Mott The Hoople, ELO, T Rex, and more... I guess I loved a lot of music... oddly I never got exposed to Irish traditional music until I was about 17 or so... a guy called Rodney Corder got me into it... it became very influential in my own work.

Were the Electrics your first band?

Nope..... I played bass in a country band called 'Crystal River', when I was 16... Then was the bassist for a rock band called 'Infrapenny'. The Electrics formed out of that band...

Did Infrapenny record anything? Did it have a similar vibe to The Electrics?

Infrapenny was a band put together to do a charity show... it was the singer's band really. It was more pop rock I guess... we did make a Cassette LP, self-financed and kinda self-produced. I think we only played about 30 shows in 3 years, and it wasn't very Celtic. However, Paul Baird was the guitarist, and it was he and I that started the Electrics when Infrapenny folded. We had good times, but it wasn't a serious band. No tours of anything like that.

What year did the Electrics form? How did you meet?

1988... Paul Baird (guitar player) and I had been in a band called Infrapenny... when it split, we hit the studio with 6 new songs. We recruited Davie McArthur on Drums and Allan Hewitt on Piano, sax and accordion... we had all known each other for a while. We never expected it to last for long... but good things happen when good buddies form a band... those guys have been my best friends and supporters to this day... great guys.

Did your band have knowledge of what was going on in America with, what I call underground Christian acts like Daniel Amos, 77's, the Choir, etc?

Well we met guys like Derri Daugherty and Steve Hindalong on European tours. We played at a lot of festivals together and became good mates. Derri sang backing vox on one of our albums.... what we didn't understand was the subculture... it all seemed very strange to us.

Did you want to tap into that market or was that something that happened on its own?

Honestly, we never had any plan... we always got offered record deals, first in The UK, then Germany, then the USA... it just sort of happened... each deal spread the word about the band. At one point I was making 3 albums a year for different record companies... solo stuff plus band stuff. It was busy but very inspiring and creatively satisfying. We started out playing university gigs, bars and some tours in the UK... within months we were touring in Portugal, Spain and France... within a few years we were being offered shows all over the world... incredible really for a bunch of friends who just liked playing music together. I don't think there was ever a time when one of us didn't say 'Can you believe this? People are paying our flights, hotel rooms and food AND paying us to play.' We were always thankful for the chance we got.

When did you first tour the States?

We played Cornerstone festival in 93... it wasn't really a tour... we played a couple of shows in Chicago and the festival... that was it.

How did the 5 Minute Walk deal come about? How was your experience with the label?

We were playing at a festival in Germany and Frank Tate, the 5 MW president saw us. We had just finished a deal with our German label and he asked if we would be interested in signing. We thought, 'why not?' It was that simple. As for what I think of it. I am still not sure. The USA was something of a culture shock for us. We didn't get the heavily policed sub-culture. In Europe it was nothing to see people smoking and having a beer at a festival. It was normal. We weren't a bunch of kids and couldn't believe the issues surrounding alcohol etc... I mean...really? I am not suggesting that you need to go do those things, but I am suggesting that you need to make up your own mind on it. I know of bands that lost deals because their record label heard they had been drinking beer. We were Irish and Scots... you get what I am saying? It all seemed weird. Of course, if we were playing to young people we were never going to tell 'em to hit the bar and get hammered, but people need to know

that life choice and how we see a life of faith is open to lots of paths... it cannot just be one narrow point of view that controls us all. Anyway, the years with 5MW have allowed me to continue to play. It helped open a fan base in the USA and I am thankful for that...it was mixed feelings for us as a band, but good things came from it.

Are The Electrics on hiatus or broken up?

We never got round to breaking up... and we still get to play some folk festivals and get invites to play around Europe. It's a bit tougher now that I am located in Canada, but the guys still play on my albums... they are the best!



picture by Beth Raich

Your solo releases seem to be a return to your roots of the music your folks listened to, deep in Folk, Country, and Americana. *Songs For The Sick And Tired* is my favorite of your solo releases, it's one of those albums that's both very personal and very relatable all at the same time. What was going on in your life while you wrote those songs?

Man... I was sick and tired. My health was suffering, my mental health was spiraling and I felt I was finished. I was broke and low (It was only about a year later until I actually tried to take my own life). I



just sort of whimpered a prayer, as best I could. I said, 'I will play anywhere I am asked, for anyone, anytime!' I started to write and decided to try to record. I swore that I would let anyone play on the record, no matter who they were or what kind of mess their life was in. It was strange, but people started asking if they could play on it. People who were recovering addicts, drunks, broken relationship issues, people with deep intimacy issues, depressed, lonely, hurting

people. I happened to be doing some shows in San Francisco and my dear friend Masaki offered to record some tracks for me. I told him I had no money, but he said we'd figure it out. I had already recorded some tracks in Scotland and Ireland, but we did another 5 in Saki's studio. The day we finished recording I got a call from a guy who had been thinking about me. He told me that he felt that whatever I was doing right now was important and that he wanted to pay for it... all of it... it was amazing. A lot of people love that album.

That brings us to the present and your latest project the Sweet Sorrows. I'm really, really, enjoying that album! Can you tell us about the project, how it came about, recording process, etc?

Well my wife Kylie and I moved to Canada a few years ago. She had been a nurse her whole life but wanted a change, and her visa here in Canada didn't permit her to work. She had sung in cover bands and some church worship bands in her time, she has a sweet voice. We thought we might as well write and do some studio work and that was it really. Her voice works pretty well with my gravelly vocals (it sounds like I smoke two packs a day, but I don't). I didn't want it to be a Sammy Horner album, and tried to keep it rootsy without being a full tilt Celtic project. You never know how people will respond to a new thing, but our first USA worked well, we have played some Canadian shows, in Jan 2014 we will do a tour in Australia, next March we are looking at a USA tour 'down south', April will take us on a UK tour and May we hope to play in Germany and Romania. Not bad for a new project that no one has heard of! Working on a new Sweet Sorrows album called *Can'ticles, Love songs for the not so perfect*. Studio work is a bit trickier with your wife... but unlike the drummer, you can kiss her when she sings well...

Are you touring the house show circuit?

We have done house shows and would love to do more...we haven't played in California yet! But we got to play festivals, bars, coffee shops, churches, community halls and more on our last tour.

Where can people find the Sweet Sorrows and other releases of yours?

It's all on BandCamp including all my past releases...
<http://sammyhorner.bandcamp.com/album/it-all-belongs>

And for other merch like our page and message us @
<https://www.facebook.com/TheSweetSorrows>

Any final thoughts?

Yeah... I am thankful that people are still interested in our music....that, more than anything makes it all worthwhile. Thank you!

MATT HUNT'S BRUTAL PLANET



Who Are You, Matt Hunt?

The truth is, and I've been keeping it a secret, I am a spring roll and nacho addict. I like to say, 'What the f**k.' And I'm a Jesus music historian. Basically, I am just a regular normal guy.

You grew up in the Midwest. You probably had bands you listened to. Do you remember what bands or artists you started out listening to growing up?

It was kind of weird growing up in the Midwest. I wasn't where any of the bands were. I was completely exempt of any type of Christian music scene anywhere. I grew up fairly poor. So my parents had no interest in paying for me to go anywhere that there was good music. I literally had to depend on my friends going to Christian bookstores out of town, bringing back good Christian music, and sharing it with me. That was my experience. Then when I was in 6th grade, I came across a CCM magazine that my Christian bookstore ordered as sort of like a free sample for me. I loved it so I started subscribing to it. And out of the classifieds, I started seeing ads for *White Throne* and *Heaven's Metal* magazines. This was about 1983 or 1984 when I started getting those magazines.

Did you first start listening to secular music, or did you get right into Christian music?

I grew up in an Assemblies of God congregation. They told me that I was burning in a lake of fire if I listened to secular music at all.

So you must be going to burn then because you have secular music in your collection now.

Well, I do now. But back then, I didn't. Occasionally at the church, we had contemporary groups like The Living Light, The Sharretts, Phil Enloe...We did actually have a cool artist show up named Randy Cutlip who was in Three Dog Night for a brief time. To this day, it's one of my favourite albums ever. Nobody knows about it but it's amazing.

Do you remember what your first concert was?

My very first concert was in Burlington, Iowa, and it was White Heart, and they were touring off their self-titled album. They came back the next year and toured off *Vital Signs*. I was blown away by how good that was. My first Christian album was The Imperials *Stand By The Power*. After that, I found a vinyl copy of Petra's *Not Of This World*. And then a guy at my school who went out of town a lot started introducing me to bands like Daniel Band, Joe English Band, Servant, David & The Giants, stuff like that. From there, I ended up finding bands like Bloodgood, Barren Cross, and Messiah Prophet.

What inspired you to do a Christian record label? How did that all begin?

I enjoyed the search for collectable stuff. I always had the desire to increase my own personal collection with rare and hard to find things. When I came across stuff that I already had, I realized there was a market for it. So in 1994 I started a mail order company called Rugged Cross Connections. I saw people like Rad Rockers, Claude Crain, John Brzykcy, people like that, selling stuff through the mail. I thought it would be fun to do that because I could find a lot of stuff that I wanted and finance my own collectible habit. I did Rugged Cross Connections until 1998. By that time I was a pastor in a church and didn't have time to do direct orders. I started a record label because I knew there was collectible stuff out there and there was nobody really doing any kind of reissues. The very first reissue I did as Magdalene Records was Charizma's *Rock The World* (<http://www.amazon.com/Rock-World-Charizma/dp/B00584DAOG>), a Swedish metal band. It's really good and is far out of print. After that, we did both of the Philadelphia releases, and got connected to M8 Distribution. We put out Recon, Daniel Band, X-Sinner, Titanic, and a bunch of good stuff.

How long did you work in conjunction with M8 Distribution?

Until we stopped getting any money. I had to do my own thing in 2002. Then I released Titanic's *Maiden Voyage*

(nolifetimetmetal.com/titanic.htm) and *The Angry Einsteins* by X-Sinner (metalreviews.com/reviews/album/1464). I broke ties with M8 for a number of reasons, and became Retroactive Records with the help of Rad Rockers.

You've gone to Cornerstone Festival for many years. You helped host the Day Of Metal. How did that originate?

The previous owners of Bombworks Records had done Day Of Metal, and I figured I'd continue that trend. Truthfully, it was poorly attended. It was a lot of work. There wasn't a lot of benefits for doing it. It played to small crowds and was very disappointing. Compared to the other stages, we didn't have really anybody showing up. Cornerstone wasn't into metal as much as it was into hardcore, alternative, and punk.

Are there any stories you can share from putting on shows? Any band stories?

We brought in a band called Skies, which we ended up releasing an album by them. It was great because we were right on the main road at Cornerstone. By the end of their show, they put on such a good show that they probably had about 150 people in the tent. To this day Skies put out one of my favourite modern hard music albums. The other one is a band called Dark Lay Still. Fantastic extreme black metal! They somehow got their band together, had a terrible experience driving from California to Cornerstone. They finally made it, late, and played what I would consider the all-time best black metal show I've ever seen in my entire life! It was absolutely stunning! Literally, as soon as the show was over, they loaded their gear up, left for California, broke down on the road, had a terrible experience,...some of the band members went off to the military, and we never, ever heard from them again. I have no idea what's happened to them.



(laughing) They are such a legend and they don't even know it! I remember that show very well. My jaw was on the floor the whole time!

I don't think there was more than 20 to 30 people there. It was a stunning show! It was flawless! Unbelievably good! The only other story I can think of is...I've been blessed to work with Michael Knott and support him in his musical endeavors and be a part of what he does. I am friends with Michael. Michael will call me at various times within a 24 hour period. It could be 2 o'clock in the afternoon, it could be 4 o'clock in the morning, it doesn't matter...he will leave me these messages that sound something like, "Hey Mathew... Matthew...Matthew, I'm just calling because I need to do the Our Father with you. So do the Our Father with me: Our Father, who art in heaven...(says the entire Our Father prayer)... for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen. And then he will hang up.

(laughing) Wow, that's great! That's classic!

Uh huh. He will totally do that. And another one, this last summer, I



went to Louisville to go to a music festival and I got to hang out with Troy and Dale Thompson of Bride. Troy hosted a friend and myself at his house for dinner. It was just fantastic. It was such a privilege to sit down in Troy's home with Dale and joke around, be a little bit goofy, and talk about life and music. I gotta say, there are some bands that I've worked with that are as genuine as you would ever imagine. Bride is one of those. Trytan and Larry Dean is also. The guys from Daniel Band are absolutely amazing...I know there is more than I've mentioned. I just want fans to know that the majority of these Christian artists that continue to be out there, they really are who they have presented themselves to be, and you should be proud of them.

And you've met up with Eric Clayton recently.

Oh yeah. That was amazing. I ended up in California for a church conference. It ended up being right around where Eric Clayton lives. So I gave him a call. I was like, "Hey Eric, I'm around." He was like, "Oh my gosh, I'm going to be right where you are!" So we ended up meeting up at this restaurant, I think it was actually called Mark's Big Boy. If you walked into the bathroom, people had etched all kinds of colorful words into the toilet seat and to every part of the bathroom that you can etch things in. You could tell it was that old of a place. I got to sit with Eric, his wife, and his two daughters. They had these amazing avocado omelettes, and it was so much fun to sit there and share that meal with them. When we were done, we stood outside of the restaurant and talked for like 20 minutes, and then we left. About a week later, Eric emailed me and said, "Hey, did you end up paying for the bill?." And I said, "No, I thought you did." (chuckles) And he said, "Well, we kind of forgot about it, and we didn't pay for it." It wasn't like we made a run for it. We stood outside the restaurant for like 20 minutes, and nobody said anything to us. So apparently, Mark's Big Boy gave us a free meal that night. It was quite exquisite.



That's pretty cool. Going back to record labels, you also have Bombworks Records. How did you obtain Bombworks?

I started Retroactive Records to do reissues and put out new albums by classic rock and metal artists. I have been doing that since 2002. I acquired Bombworks Records around 2008. I was close to my friends Rob Colwell and David Bixler. They were the visionaries that started a Christian music label that focused on black and death metal, and the more extreme side of metal. After a while, things did not work out financially for them and they transitioned into new areas in their life and were ready to get out of the scene. So they talked to me about it, we came to an agreement, and I took over the label for them. I was blessed to be able to work with bands like A Hill To Die Upon (their first album is my favourite black metal release ever), Holy Blood, My Silent Wake, Seventh Angel (which I consider to be one of the best extreme releases in Christian music of all time), and most recently, A Grave Declaration and Antestor, which kind of blow my mind in term of sales and popularity. Then around 2012 we launched Born Twice Records which focuses on reissuing out of print Jesus music albums from the '70s and '80s.

So you've got three genre type labels, all under your distribution company Brutal Planet.

That's right. We do distribution world-wide. We got distribution in the mainstream market, and in the European market, and we also sell online with Amazon and eBay. We do digital distribution through CD Baby. We also have some distribution into the Family Christian stores as well. We also have record label sites for each label. Then we have partners around the world that sell Christian music. A high percentage of our stuff sells on Amazon.

Were there any albums that you thought would go like big time, sell like hot cakes, and did not sell that well?

I learned a few hard lessons that I did not learn very well just because I'm sort of stubborn and hard headed. If I love and cherish an album, sometimes I allow that to dictate whether I put it out or not. Michael Knott's *Dogfish Jones* ([amazon.com/Dogfish-Jones-LSU/dp/B000TLYODO](https://www.amazon.com/Dogfish-Jones-LSU/dp/B000TLYODO)) sold extremely poorly. There wasn't much demand for it. The majority of the Born Twice Records reissues, aside from Daniel Amos which always sells extremely well, didn't sell much. Some of those releases, I am absolutely as proud as I can possibly be about them...Bill Mason Band's *No Sham*...Mike Johnson's two albums that are early psychedelic Jesus music... The Exkursions, which is heavy fuzz psychedelic hard rock...Stronghold's *Fortress Rock* that is very heavy, sludgy, Black Sabbath-like classic hard rock...none of them have sold particularly well. But they are all exceptional albums in their genre, and worthy of the attention of Jesus music, Christian rock, and hard rock enthusiasts world-wide. They are outstanding releases and I am very, very proud of them.

Those albums needed to be put out. They were released on vinyl, went out of print, and collectors scrambled around to find them. You actually provide people with an opportunity to hear these records 20 years later. They can now go in the hands of people who have not heard them before, as well as vitalize the collections of those who may have had them years ago, let go of their vinyl, and can now obtain them again.

It's disappointing when they don't sell well because we go to extreme measures to make sure we get a high quality release. I'm confident on every account that what you get from us, you will never in your life find a better audio copy of it. We have a guy who does all our re-mastering. I consider him the best in the world at what he does. Nobody's going to take their re-mastering of what they put on their computer and do a better job of maintaining the integrity of the original music, and editing and re-mastering this music. We cater to that music enthusiast who wants the value of the original music, re-mastering it so it sounds the best it ever could.

Do you want to give kudos to who that is?

That's Jonathan Walker, also known as Cliffy Huntington. Jonathan also goes by J. Powell Steinhaus, and he's the best at what he does. He's absolutely an amazing and invaluable part of our team.

Other than your record labels and distribution, what else do you do? What



do you do in the week?

My full gig is being a pastor in a local United Church of Christ congregation. If you want to see what the UCC denomination stands for in general, go to UCC.org. Just realize that it is not your traditional, conservative denomination. They are really good about cutting to the chase about what they stand for, what they believe, and what they want to do in terms of being a witness for Jesus in this world. I'm a pastor at a small congregation. The other thing I get to do is teach an ethics class at a local liberal arts college. That takes up my Monday evenings.

Sounds like you keep plenty busy. And you have family as well.

Yep, I've got a daughter, 11, and a son, 16. I actually have a business called Boone's Overstock that focuses on online sales on Amazon, which sells household products, health products, toys, music, everything like that. We have 4 full time employees.

That's amazing. Now you've been a pastor for a number of years now. Have you developed a vision for the church?

One of the things I've noticed is the church has been around long enough and it's become traditionalized. That can become a barrier to people that are trying to find Jesus or need to find Jesus or want an experience to love the presence of God. The vision I have really comes down to we got to stop being church the way we want to and we got to diligently pray and say, 'God, what kind of church do you want us to be.' I really hope and believe that church that God wants us to be will be for people that don't go to church. There are people that were Christians have been hurt or discouraged, and for some reason, fell away from the church. Also, is called to reach out to people that have not gone to church, do not know the bible, do not know about prayer, do not know about God, and don't know what it is to be liberal or conservative. The church is called to put aside what we like and what we want about church, and ask, what does it take to create a place for people that do not know God, and to take that seriously, to look through those lenses to see what we can do to help people experience the love, grace, and mercy of God that's out there.

It sounds like you're not worried about how it's been done before. Rather, it's how Jesus is relevant for people today and how the church be there for those people. It will be an interesting journey. I hope your church identifies with that vision and goes forward. How have your beliefs in Christianity changed since you were a young Christian?

I grew up in a very conservative and fundamentalist congregation. They had a lot of affect on me. What they instilled in me was a love for Jesus and a love for the bible. But the way that it has changed is that I find a lot of those ways are not consistent and are not always helpful to people. In many ways we end up serving these traditions like we're here to serve them rather than they are there to serve us. I have changed my views in that I do not worship the bible. I absolutely love and cherish the bible but I don't worship it. I don't pick out certain scriptures and pretend like they are the only ones that the bible talks about. When it talks about sexuality, when it talks about marriage, when it talks about other issues, I take all of it seriously and realize it actually says more than one thing about the same issue. If I said that to the

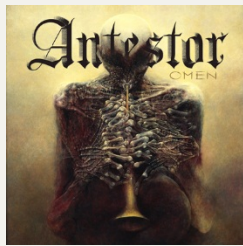
people in the church that I grew up in, they would brand me as a heretic, and I've been called a heretic before. But I definitely believe if you take the bible seriously, you've got to admit that on multiple issues, the bible says more than one thing. The bible is not there to always be taken literally. It's there to guide and direct us, and help us to understand the God that Jesus came to reveal to us. It's also good for helping us understand how Christians and the people of God historically wrestled with ethics and spirituality of how to be faithful to God. I think that is a powerful thing for us to have, but that's a much different way to approach it than what I grew up being taught.



Cool. Let's go back to record labels. I have some names, and if anything comes to mind in terms of these bands, could you say a line or two. I'm going to start with Bombworks.

Antestor.

They have a lot of dedicated fans. They are outstanding musicians. Fans should know it is very, very challenging for them to put out the music they do. And fans should be grateful because it's outstanding.



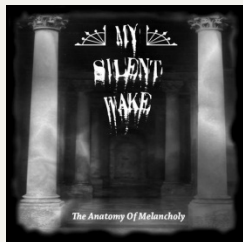
Holy Blood.

Holy Blood is from the Ukraine. We've done a descent job communicating but we've never actually talked on the phone with Fedor. I just sent him a MoneyGram from Walmart because they don't have Paypal in the Ukraine. I helped provide funds so that he can finish the new album that he has coming out, called *Day Of Vengeance*, that will see the light of day in 2014.



My Silent Wake.

I have a personal love for their music. Their fan base is not big as it is for Seventh Angel. It has been challenging to get the sales that I believe that band deserves. From an artistic standpoint, I think that metal band is hard to beat. We continue to put out their music and try to find ways to creatively promote it, and be patient for sales. I wish more people would take notice of this artistic doom metal giant out there called My Silent Wake.



Divulgence.

I have actually been listening to their cd a lot lately. The reason we wanted to sign them



originally is because they had that Slayer sound, that *South Of Heaven*, *Reign In Blood* kind of fast paced metal sound, like that early Living Sacrifice sound. They were young kids, had a great look, a great sound, and put out one album with us. Truthfully, it's got the progressive structures of Tourniquet. Some of the vocals have a bit of death metal vibe. It's actually a full-on progressive thrash sound, sort of a Tourniquet-Living Sacrifice hybrid.

A Hill To Die Upon.

They have been with Bombworks from the very start when I took over the label. They put out their first album in the first year I had the label in 2009. We've sold more of their first album than any other release on the label. We're nearing 3000 units of that. They are amazing human beings, amazing musicians, and we will put out their new most recent release in the next couple months. We are looking forward to releasing that to the public as well.



Let's go to Retroactive Records.

Ultimatum.

Great band. I love Scott Walters. I hope that band can work through some of the gaps of band members to put out a new album.



Mainline Riders.

That's Cliffy Huntington. Cliffy is a natural born rock star. It grieves me everyday that he's not putting out new music. He's got a family, a great life, and a good plan, and right now music is not a part of that. But maybe someday we'll be lucky enough to have him come back and get some more classic hard rock and metal. Their second album is one of my all-time favourite hard rock albums. It sounds so much like AC-DC. It's so good, it's unbelievable. If you saw them at Cornerstone, you were absolutely blown away.



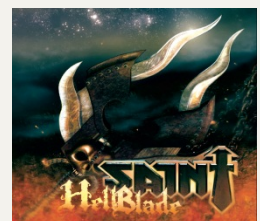
Bride.

I love working with Bride. They might be the most prolific artists I've ever worked with. They started out as a classic metal band, and every single album they come out with seems to get more and more creative. They're never boring. You never know exactly what you're going to get from their next one except that it's going to be amazing.



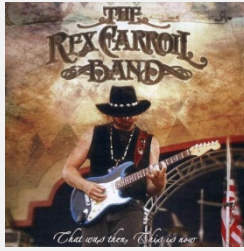
Saint.

They've been a great addition to the label. We support Richard Lynch and the band 100 percent. We cherish every chance we get to help them out. If you like Judas Priest, you can't get any better than these guys.



Rex Carroll.

Working with Rex is a privilege and an honor. He works hard, he loves Jesus. If he can play out and get a crowd of people, he will sell product because he's that good! I've never seen anyone who can sell product like Rex Carroll, it's unbelievable.



Messiah.

That was a guilty pleasure that we put out. If you like early Alice Cooper or early Kiss, this stuff is really high-quality live hard rock and metal. We were lucky to come across Charles Michael. We came across at a time when he needed us and we needed him. I'm really proud of those two albums we put out. I wish there was more because I'd like to be more financially helpful to him and his family.



Mass.

Loved working with Mass. They are the confident professionals. They communicate well. They are always respectful. They put out amazing music. They are great with their fans. They are supportive of the record label. You got some true winners to be proud of. They put out world class music with every single release.



Rivera Bomma.

They got the bass player Mike LePond from Symphony X. Their album actually took 4 to 5 years for them to record. We wanted them to come out with something earlier than that. But they couldn't do it. So we ended up just being patient and supportive of them. They love Jesus and we think the world of them. It's a great progressive power metal album, and it has some really great tracks on it.



Saviour Machine.

Eric has been amazing to us. Working with Saviour Machine is always a joy because Eric is creative, thoughtful, and he loves his fans. It's funny because he lives at night and sleeps during the day. So I have to get up at 4 in the morning to talk him.



Grave Robber.

Grave Robber was one of the first newer bands we started to work with. Cliffy Huntington gave me a heads up. He was like, 'Yeah, I gave your address to my buddy Shawn. He's got a band.' I think they were called The Migraines. Cliffy was like, 'They kind of got an '80s vibe to them.' I said, 'Alright. I'll look forward to their package.' So I get the package, and sure enough, it had a generic, alternative, '80s hard rock vibe to it. It wasn't good at all.

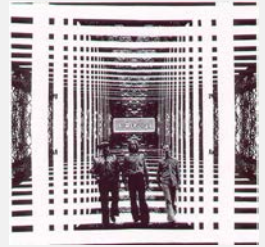


Just as an afterthought, Shawn put in, 'I have a second band called Grave Robber, we recorded an album, and here it is.' And it just so happened that I had, for the first time in my life, I had been listening to Misfits. And I was like, Oh my gosh, this is just like Misfits except they're actually good musicians! It was amazing! I was like, 'I have no interest in The Migraines, but I absolutely love Grave Robber.' We ended up signing them and put out a couple albums. They became sort of a cult favourite at Cornerstone Festival. They decided to do their own thing, and that was cool. We support Shawn and the band 100 percent. But that was pretty special. We were glad to be a part of that as a label.

I want to touch on Born Twice Records.

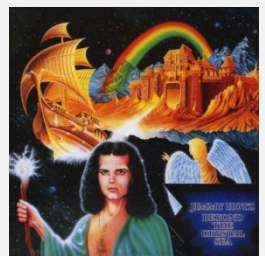
The Exkursions & Mike Johnson.

Mike Johnson was the very first artist to team up with Compassion International. He was a contemporary of Randy Stonehill, of Larry Norman, of Randy Matthews. This was a guy that in the early '70s went out there on college campuses, in coffeehouses, and on the street, taking the good news about Jesus and his love. Some of his songs are folk, it was acoustic guitar, and some of them he just rips out his electric guitar like Larry Norman and Randy Stonehill did. His music is every bit as good as Randy's. We put out 200 hundred CDs. We had no choice but to reissue it from the best vinyl rips we possibly could and let Cliffy work his magic. Mike Johnson started out with The Exkursions, which was like hard rock psychedelic. His solo stuff had some of those psychedelic moments. When we talked to him, he had already had some strokes. We were able to work closely with him to get two of his albums re-mastered and reissued on CD. Those are probably going to be the only ones that ever see light of day in digital format because he died in the last year. We just feel honored and privileged that we were able to take pieces of this Christian music history and make them available.



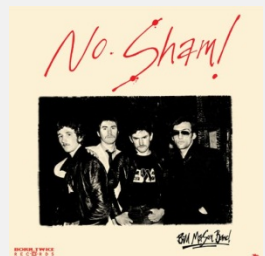
Jimmy Hotz.

Jimmy is a true musician. He understands progressive, spacey music. He understands the recording process. We put out his album, *Beyond The Crystal Sea*, and re-mastered it. It has a couple bonus tracks. As far as spacey, '70s progressive rock, it doesn't get any better than that.



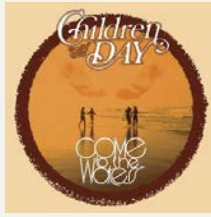
Bill Mason Band.

I can't say enough good stuff about the Bill Mason Band. That was a 1979 release, early Christian punk in the vein of The Clash. Like The Clash, they had a really diverse sound but a very strong punk vibe. That Bill Mason Band album, it never gets old! They were a UK band, contemporaries with the Sex Pistols, The Clash, all those bands that were over there doing the early punk scene. Christian music was blessed to have Bill Mason Band doing that very thing. We were able, for the first time ever, to make it available in the US, and on cd. It's really good stuff.



Children Of The Day.

It was interesting because Marsha came out a long time ago that she was gay but she didn't renounce her faith. So here's the conservative Christian music scene, and Marsha didn't renounce her faith in Jesus or her ministry that she had to people who are gay. I licensed the albums from another record label and invited the other band members to participate in this reissue. You could tell that as a band, they were very torn with how to handle the complexities. The band members were hurt, some of them did not agree with things, and they are still conflicted. It was kind of an interesting band. I stayed neutral and said, 'I love you all and invite you all to be a part of these special releases that are a part of Jesus music history.' I'm still very proud of those releases.



Amaziah.

Amaziah was funny because if you get the vinyl, it can be a very high dollar collectible. It's kind of progressive, kind of psychedelic, kind of hard rock, it almost has a punk vibe to it in places. It was interesting to work with this UK band to the release of that album that originally came out, which Tunesmith reissued in the States. It wasn't the best band in the world. If you take that Tunesmith release, the one guy's wearing a leopard hippie vest and they look like goofy teenagers. It's kind of hilarious. It was just too much fun putting that one out. The music is actually good.



Are there any albums from your labels you are looking forward to releasing?

We're putting out some compilations called *Heroes And Legends Of Christian Metal* for Retroactive Records, *Heroes And Legends Of Christian Extreme Metal* for Bombworks, and *Heroes And Legends Of Jesus Music* for Born Twice. They're going to be compilation CDs that focus on those genres. I'm excited about that because I'm hoping they will introduce people to some Jesus music, extreme metal, and hard rock artists.

You also have some Barnabas albums coming out as well.

Yep, we're working with Nancyjo Mann to make that a reality. I was hoping to release them the first part of this year, but we have too many releases. We are coming out with Gideon's Army, reissuing their two releases. We're putting out Lifesavers *Heaven High* album that is available digitally but not in physical format, A Hill To Die Upon's new one, Holy Blood's new one, new Haven as well as reissues. There's a lot of stuff on the board, so it will probably be the later half of this year before the Barnabas releases come out. And also Rex Carroll Band's new one, Whitecross' 1987 album as a deluxe package, with an additional bonus track, a new guitar solo that Rex did just for this release. We technically sold out of that 1987 album.

What albums have you been enjoying lately?

I'm really into bands like The Black Keys, The Avett Brothers, Mumford & Sons...I love Patty Griffin, I think she's amazing. I love the bluegrass of Steve Martin. I love classic bluegrass. Lately, I've been listening to Saint's *Revelation* album and David Benson's

Premonition Of Doom, ...and I just drove out of town and listened to the Now CD called *That's What I Call Classic Rock*. I still love the black gospel of Andrea Crouch and Walter Hawkins.

Do you have any role models?

I remember specifically growing up, reading *Harvest Rock Syndicate*. The guy behind that was Brian Quincy Newcoln. I ended up being in the same denomination as him. I hope someday I get to meet him. Every time he posts something on Facebook, I always want to share it because it's like, "Wow, that is really smart. That is perceptive." It feels like everything he does, he nails it on the head of where it ought to be. Brian Quincy Newcoln very inspirational to me. And I try to stay connected to other Christians and stay accountable to other friends and confidants and other leaders that I live around.

So there you have it folks. Support Matt Hunt and the Bands. You will not regret it. Links to check out:

Born Twice Records (Jesus Music '69-'89)
myspace.com/borntwicerecords

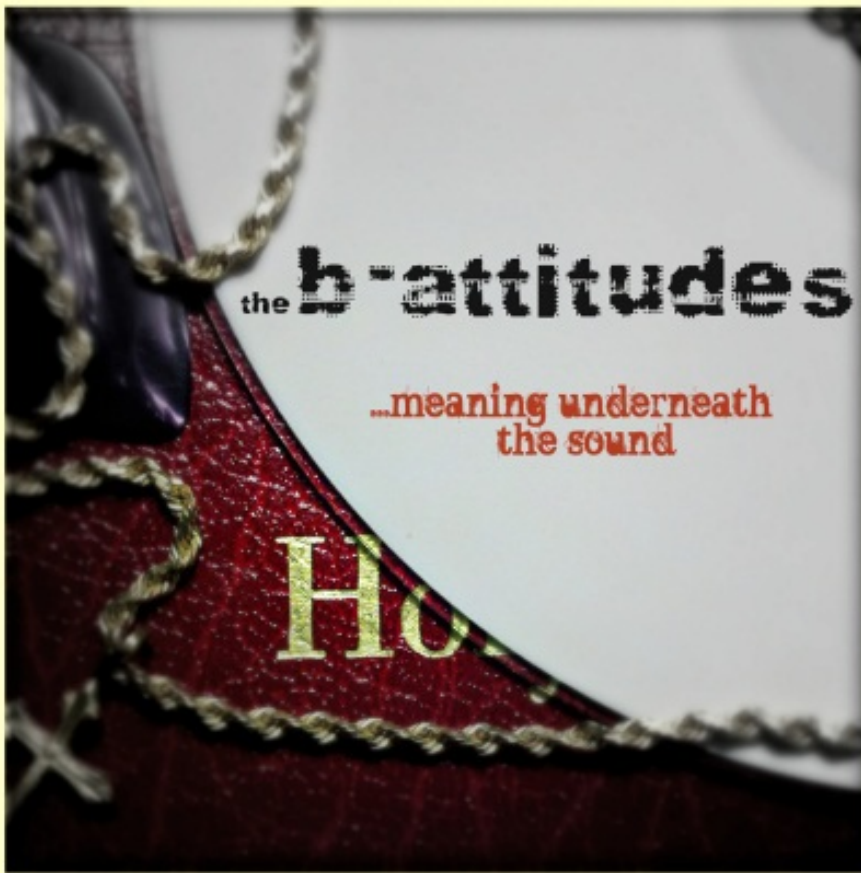
Retroactive Records (classic rock & metal)
retroactiverecords.net

Bombworks Records (extreme metal)
bombworksrecords.com

Interview by Doug Peterson, who lives in Vancouver, BC. Doug used to write for White Throne magazine, White Noise magazine, and is insisting Down The Line change it's name to Down The White Line magazine. Before you get the wrong idea, Doug supports racial equality and no sheets were cut in the making of this interview.



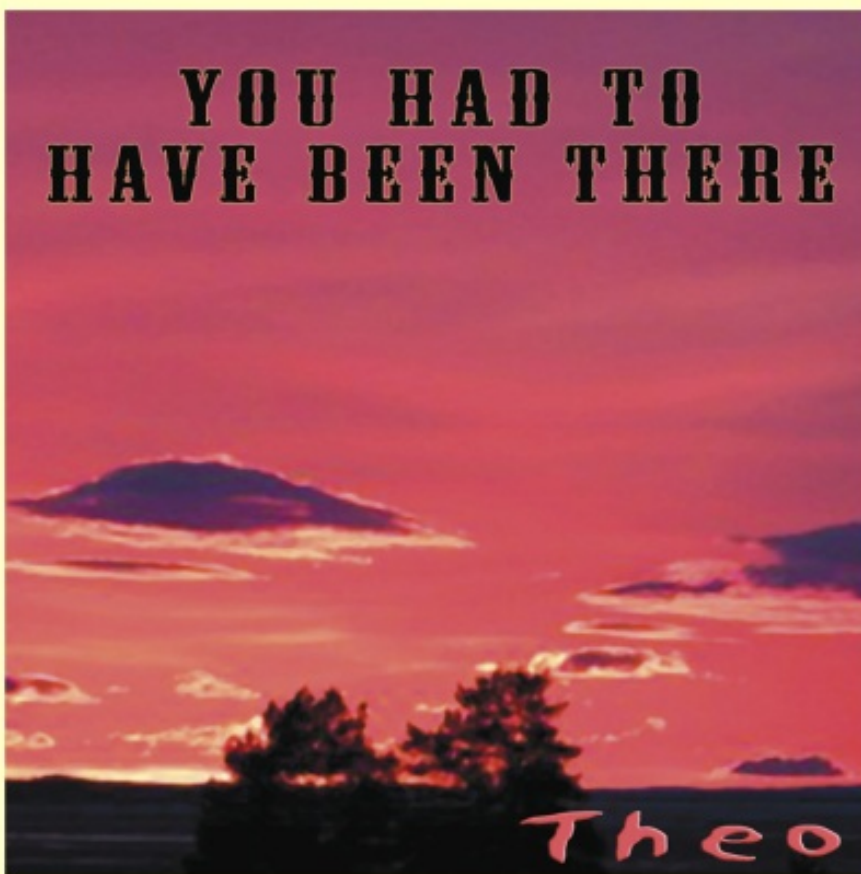
THE B-ATTITUDES



**alternative
rock**

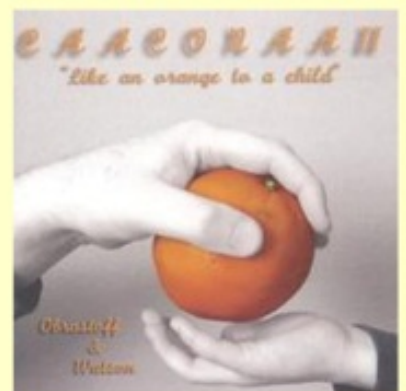
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THEO OBRASTOV



**alternative
indie
folk
rock**

also available:



ANDYSANGELSRECORDS.ORG



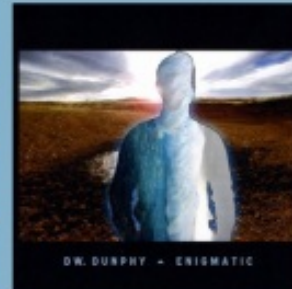
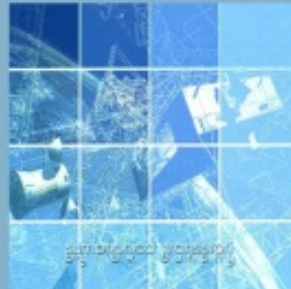
**alternative
progressive
orchestral
rock
pop**

THE RADIAL NIGHT



The Found Change EP

also available:



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Seventh Circle

The Struggle - 2013 2-CD - Special Edition Remaster

We first interviewed Seventh Circle's Adam Pederson back in Issue #4. We spoke at length then about his album *The Struggle*, it was a great interview with a guy that puts out a generous helping of dark and emotional music. *The Struggle* was one of those exciting new finds that I was really impressed with, and was quite honestly surprised at how good the album was when I first heard it. Since that interview Seventh Circle has released several great projects you can check out here...

seventhcircle.bandcamp.com

Adam decided to re-release the expanded version of *The Struggle*. This gem has been remastered and has a second disc of the demos which is really cool. The demos were basically the tracks before Eric Clayton got on board with the project, and they are really pretty amazing as you can hear the tracks in their original glory which is something I like to do. It's always cool to hear an artist's vision before anyone else is involved with the project, you get the purest view of the music that way. Adam answered a couple of questions about the new release and I wanted to pass it on. Most of our readers who are fans of Saviour Machine will really dig this record, not because the affiliation with Eric, but more because the music that Seventh Circle created here is dark, intense and full of melancholy that is completely unsettling in some songs, and then surprisingly comforting in others.

This album made my top 5 picks from my "best of 2013" list, and I highly recommend headphones to hear the story and all the various layers of sound and ambience. Pop on over to the bandcamp site and support this project with money! Support your independent music.

What are the differences in the new release, what you wanted to change and why, and what people can expect to hear with the new vs old?

The main reason behind wanting to remaster it was simply because when I did it back in 2008, I didn't know that much about mixing and mastering. I'm certainly no pro now but I

listened to the album and knew I could do better... I think it sounds louder, clearer and has more bottom end which is what I wanted to achieve. It's a definite improvement. It just so happened the five year anniversary was coming up. I also had some rare tracks that I thought would be cool for people to hear. I didn't sell many of them and still have them for sale at seventhcircle.bandcamp.com. Check it out and if you like it, please buy it.

Any new news on upcoming stuff?

I am hoping to release *HUMAN Part I* this year... Hopefully by mid-late summer. I have to record vocals on about ten more songs, then edit them... then mix and master the album. A lot to do but once I find a good studio to record vocals it won't take me long. I'm also working with a couple friends on an electronica project called Chrysalis Eyes... that page is here: chrysaliseyes.bandcamp.com. I am proud of what we are coming up with there and we hope to release an EP this year as well.

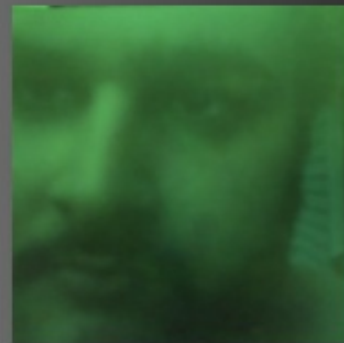
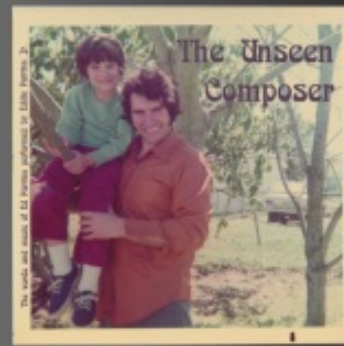


eddie

parrino



The newest release from Eddie. Also available:



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[...continued from page 8]

Wovenhand to Release Refractory Obdurate
From [Mass Movement Magazine](#): “Wovenhand are a band led by dedicated life musician and lyricist David Eugene Edwards. Over the last two decades, his prolific work in Wovenhand and the legendary 16 Horsepower has influenced and inspired a generation of musicians throughout the expansive alternative music world. Wovenhand are currently in the studio recording their new album titled *Refractory Obdurate*. The album will be released by a partnership of Deathwish in North America and Glitterhouse Records in Europe later in 2014. A release date and specifics will be announced shortly.”

New Upcoming Releases Page

We have decided to start a page to track all upcoming and recent releases that would be of interest to our readers. The list is still a work in progress – links are going to be added as we get time. We also apologize for any omissions – but we would like to add them! Send any additions or corrections to [downthelinezine \(at\) gmail \(dot\) com](mailto:downthelinezine@gmail.com). Check it out at this link:

downthelinezine.com/upcoming/

Nate Houge & Welaware Release Anchor

From Nate Houge: “Yep. It’s done, it’s released, all the pre-orders have been sent and now it’s available for immediate download and purchase. As with [all my music](#) you can pay what you want for the MP3 version and for the physical CD (which comes with an immediate free download of the MP3s) you can pay what you want starting as low as \$5 to cover shipping and handling. This is the best album I’ve ever made. It has an immediacy and passion that I’ve been trying to capture for years. The packaging is great – an uncoated finish with that sweet Anchor designed by my friend Erin and an insert with all the lyrics and liner notes. The band rocked (as playing with great friends and musicians will do), the studio was old school and analog with the King of Northfield at the helm. I love everything about this album. I want you to have it.”

The Old-Timers To Release “*Spiritus Sanctus*”

The Old-timers album *Spiritus Sanctus* officially releases December 17, 2013. *Spiritus Sanctus* is the third release from South Africa’s punk/thrash masters The Old-timers (www.facebook.com/theoldtimers). Digital downloads are available through iTunes and all the usual suspects on December 17, 2013. Released jointly by Thumper Punk Records and Veritas Vinyl.

Loam Is Back and Recording a New Album

‘Tis the season for Kickstarters! Some of you may remember Loam, who recorded one album for Stunt Records (home to Daniel Amos, Swirling Eddies, The Lost Dogs, Terry

Taylor, and Eve Selis) as well a few other recordings. They are now back to record a new album. You can read their plans on their [Kickstarter page](#). You can also listen to or purchase all of their albums on their [Bandcamp page](#).

Five Iron Frenzy Releases New Album

Speaking of Kickstarter (yet again), [Five Iron Frenzy](#) has released a new album called *Engine of a Million Plots*. If you weren’t one of the backers for this project, you can still check out the new album as well as the cool videos they have been creating in support of it.

Deliverance Releases *Hear What I Say*

3 Frogz Records and Roxx Records have released the final album from metal masters Deliverance. *Hear What I Say!* is mix of all of the styles that the Big D has covered through the years, and maybe one of their best albums ever. Pick up your copy to see what all of the hype is about. Featuring Jimmy Brown, Michael Phillips, Manny Morales, and Jayson Sherlock

The Altar Billies New Video

Big Boy steam engine 4014 is about ready to make its historic move from Pomona to Cheyenne for restoration. In honor of this move: Altar Billies released the song/video “*Titans of the Wasatch*” (Ballad of the big Boy) today...“There ain’t noth’n quite like a Big, big Boy!!”

Destroy Nate Allen Releases Vinyl

Glow The Dark is a 12-track collection of Destroy Nate Allen favorites, brought to you by Vinyl Remains and released on a 10”, highlighter yellow and hot pink vinyl record. The record comes with two full album downloads; 1 album download is ripped directly from the vinyl and the other is of your standard mp3 fair. Only 300 records have been made!

Champion Releases 1987

Champion Leader is another musical offshoot of Luxury (or basically a solo venture of Jamie Bozeman) that has been releasing some great singles and ep through the years. Now unleashed for your listening pleasure is a full length simply title *1987*. You can listen to it or purchase it through the BandCamp link. There are also a couple of covers on the albums you might recognize.

Hammock Releases *Oblivion Hymns*

Hammock has released a new album called *Oblivion Hymns*. You can check out the new tunes as a digital download; a custom eight panel CD digipak; a double gatefold 150-gram black vinyl set with CD in paper sleeve; and a limited edition package featuring a test pressing, a clear/black swirl double vinyl, a full CD digipak, and a 12” x 12” hand-screened print of album artwork by artist Amy Pleasant. All editions include a download of *Oblivion*

Hymns complete with two exclusive bonus tracks. [Click here to order](#).

Brain Healy In Need of Your Prayers

For those who haven’t heard, Brian Healy of Dead Artist Syndrome has been in the hospital recently and is in need of thoughts and prayers. He has been in and out of the ER with strokes and cardiac issues. [This page](#) will be the best source for information for the near future. Dead Artist Syndrome’s new album, *Kissing Strangers*, is still in the works as Healy recovers.

New Website for Steve Fairnie

Fans of the late Steve Fairnie have a newly revamped website to check out at fairnie.net. For those that don’t know, Steve Fairnie was a music pioneer in bands such as Fish Co, Writz, Famous Names, Techno Twins, Techno Orchestra, and The Technos. He also was an accomplished artist, actor, and thinker. The exciting thing about this new site is the mention of an upcoming Bandcamp site with music to purchase.

L.S.U. Albums Released From Vault

“Rewind Episode 28 features music from L.S.U. (a.k.a. Life Savers Underground), one of many Michael Knott band names. The show uses footage from a Knott in-studio interview by Rewind host, Brian Healy. It is timed perfectly with the digital release of 3 L.S.U. albums, originally on Blonde Vinyl and Siren Records. Knott spontaneously writes and plays songs and relates colorful stories, including an experience with late pastor, Chuck Smith.” See frontlinerecords.us to listen to the interview.

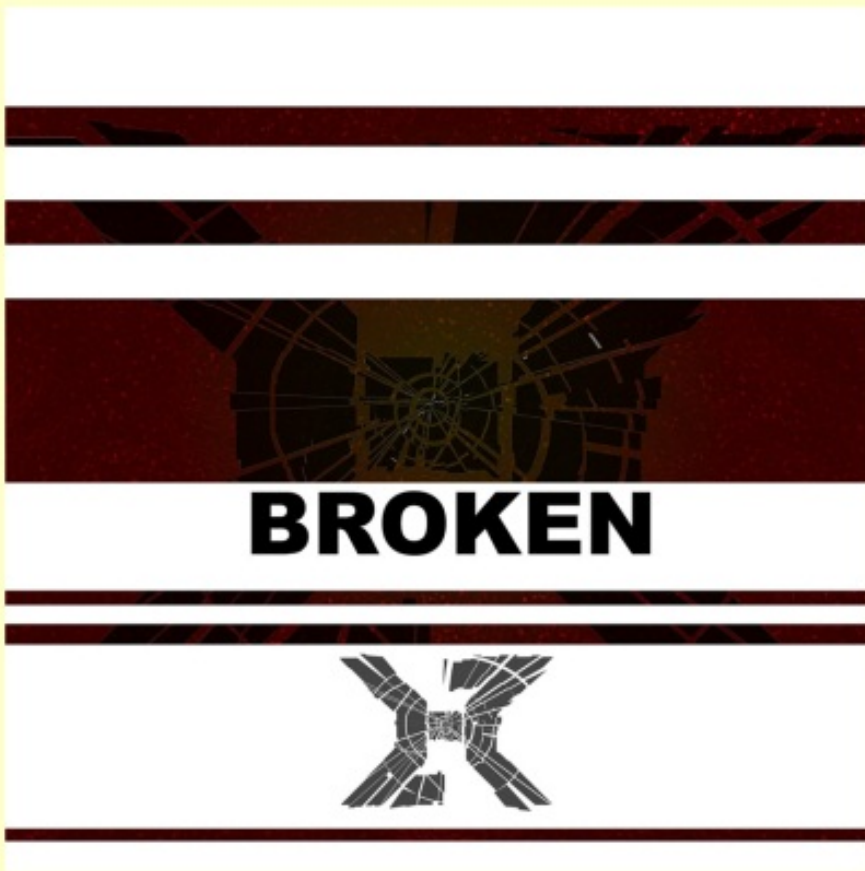
The Choir To Release New Studio Album

The Choir successfully crowd funded a new studio album and live album through Kickstarter at the end of the year. The studio album, *Shadow Weaver*, is nearing completion and should be ready soon. The live album as well as live dates will soon follow. See thechoir.net for details.

Luxury is Recording a New Album

Luxury’s last record, *Health & Sport*, was released in 2005. There was no intention to end things with that record necessarily, but we all know how “way leads on to way” and we would not have been too surprised to find that nothing else was done again. But we find ourselves here in 2013 and the possibility of making a new Luxury record has appeared. This is not too surprising either. The suggestion was made last year and since that time, we have slowly been writing songs, having conversations, considering what can be done, and daring to be optimistic that you, our friends, will help us make a new record a reality. See the [successfully funded Kickstarter page](#) for details.

HUMAN 2.7



**electronic
industrial
dance
ebm**

also available:

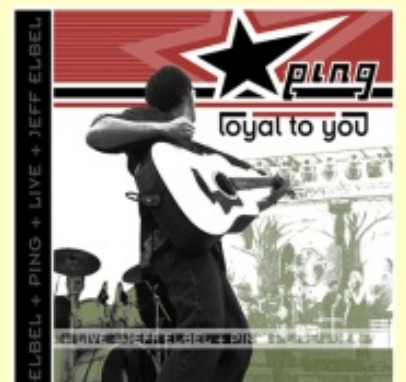


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JEFF ELBEL + PING



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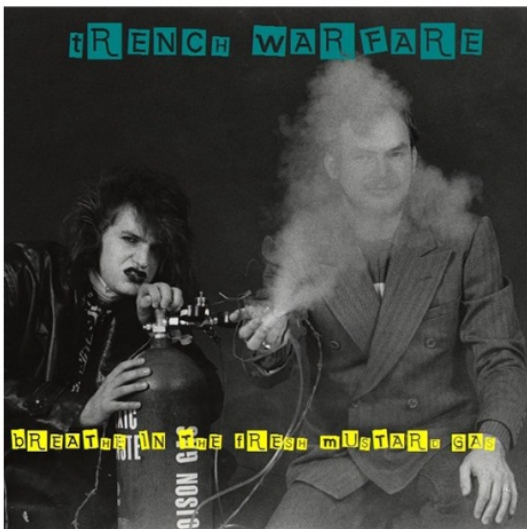
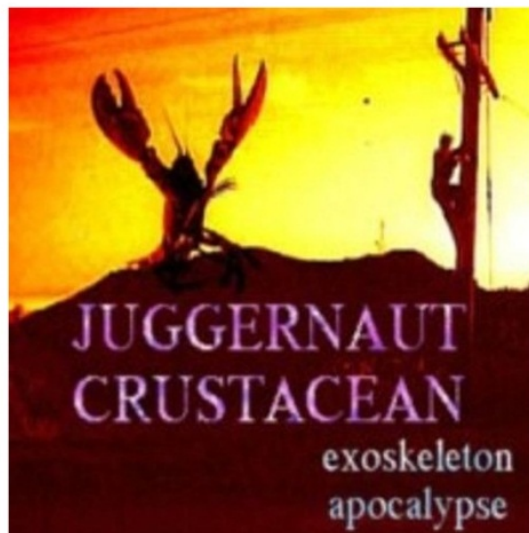
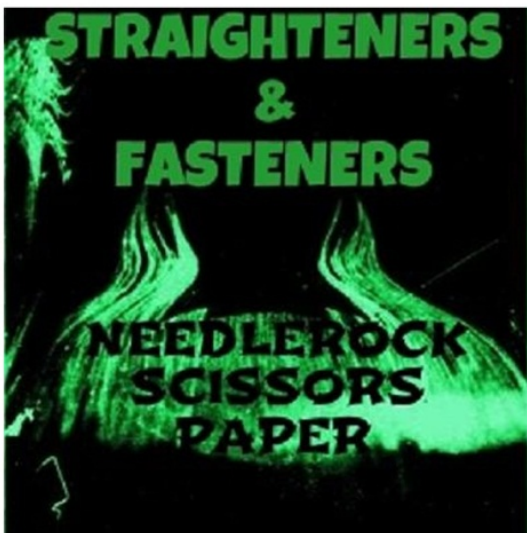
DOWN THE LINE COLLECTIVE

**THE BLOODY
STRUMMERS**
RETURN OF THE HALCYON DAYS

WESTERN GRACE

TAKE BACK THE SCENE

COLLECTIVE CLASSICS!



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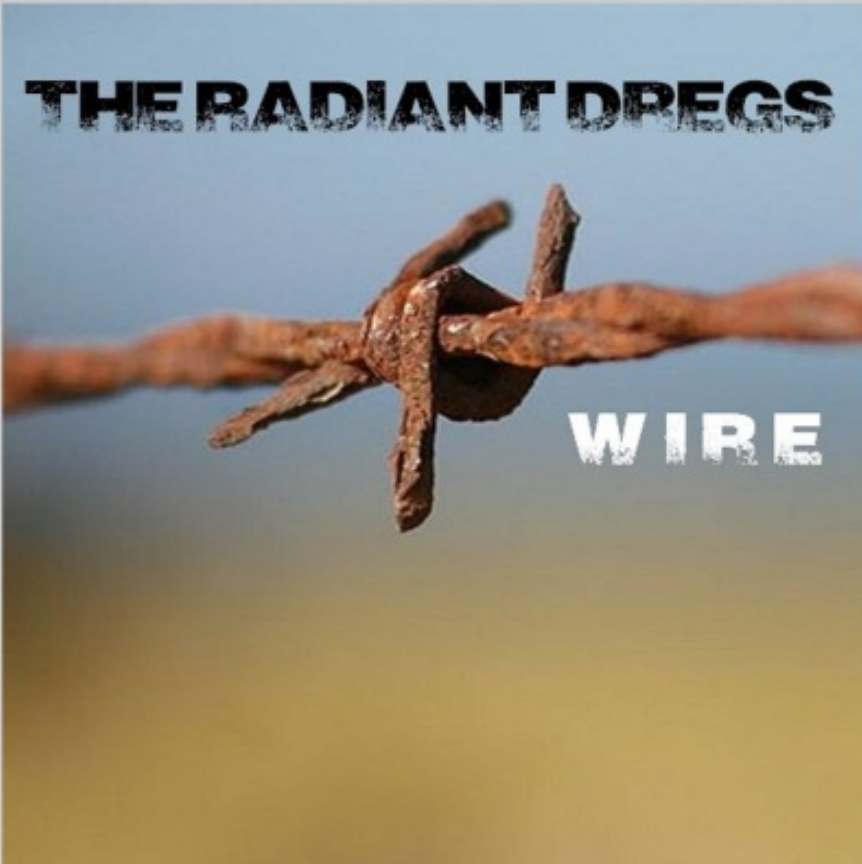
JIM WIITA



also available:



THE RADIANT DREGS



also available:



Decrypting Under Midnight

By Chad Thomas Johnston

Oh, the irony.

An industrial band comprised of two brothers writes a forward-looking industrial album that explores faith in the context of a technology-driven, dystopian future. Fast-forward almost twenty years, and the band's future is our present: we have become troubled technophiles and then some. But are the brothers behind this band anywhere to be found on the Internet—that hive mind that allows us to access information about just about *anyone*?

No. Frankie and dB Allen, futurists though they were, are nowhere to be found in the digital domain. Google's all-seeing eyes cannot find any more facts about them than what I already have in my possession.

A survey of my evidence for the existence of the brothers Allen: One self-titled debut album. A second record titled *Void*. A ninety-nine cent "Cybervision" cassingle and a low-budget music video for the same song on [YouTube](#).

How could siblings who sang of "jacking into the mainframe" on albums released through an imprint of Word Records—the most mainstream of all Christian labels—disappear without leaving footprints of some kind on the Web? The words of a tech-head friend of mine from high school come to mind: "Format C-colon." It is as if Frankie and dB Allen have somehow succeeded in erasing themselves from some cosmic hard-drive.

Imagine my surprise then, when I discover an archived *Chicago Tribune* article titled, "[Voyagers in Cyberspace: They Have Seen the Future and It's Nothin' But Net](#)." Written in 1995, the piece explores the Internet as a largely unexplored "final frontier."

One of the featured interviewees is someone named Caesar Kalinowski, who discusses his band, Under Midnight, without a single reference to Frankie or dB Allen. As it turns out, the brothers Allen never existed in the first place. Frankie and dB were pseudonyms all along.

I soon find Caesar on Twitter and ask if I can interview him about Under Midnight, as nature abhors a vacuum. So does cyberspace, I tell him. And there is a dearth of information on the band on the Web. I must fill this information gap with words.

Caesar agrees, but then we struggle to coordinate our schedules. Before I can interview him, I learn that dB Allen of Under Midnight is none other than Mark Robertson—former member of The Altar Boys, The Stand, This Train, and Rich Mullins's Ragamuffin Band, and current member of The Dirt Daubers and The Legendary Shackshakers. I interview Mark via Facebook, and shortly thereafter interview Caesar via Skype.

The following interview is a compilation of the responses I received from Mark and Caesar. Neither interviewee read or

influenced the other's responses. This interview then, should read something like two independent Gospel accounts of the story of Under Midnight.

Chad Thomas Johnston: Where did Under Midnight come from, creatively speaking? What were the origins of the band, both in name and concept?

Mark Robertson: Caesar came up with the name. I was in a band called The Stand and we were signed to Wonderland. I coproduced the *In Three Days* record, and Caesar thought I had strong production instincts and asked me to come up with a project.

I'd been messing around a lot with sampling/programming, was a huge fan of Einstürzende Neubauten, Test Dept, Skinny Puppy, etc. I was also intrigued by the second wave industrial bands that used metal/punk guitar: Ministry's *Land of Rape and Honey* and Nine Inch Nails's first record, which appealed more to Caesar than the original industrial 'musique concrete' thing I was into. I had also gone off the deep end for cyberpunk literature—William Gibson, in particular. *Blade Runner* was a very obvious influence, with all that dystopian stuff.

Caesar Kalinowski: At the time, I thought we needed a name like PM Dawn—such a cool band name—and then Under Midnight came up. And then Thom Wolfe came up with the logo, and it was so freakin' perfect.

CTJ: Why did you choose to use pseudonyms?

MR: There were a few reasons, at least from my point of view. Consider the two members. I came out of bands like The Altar Boys and The Stand, and Caesar was a record company owner with an iffy reputation and a mullet. I thought if we kept our identities hidden and left no footprints, it would be more interesting and people would be less likely to pre-judge it. Also, if it sucked, it wouldn't reflect on me!

CK: I used the pseudonym Frankie Allen because I didn't want to be known as an artist. When we did our interviews for radio and magazines during the Under Midnight era, we didn't have Skype yet, so we did it over the phone. We would do it in the studio and grind our voices up just like on the record. People were like, "What is going on with the connection?" And we always played it off like, "What?" "Your voice sounds grainy and weird." "It sounds normal to me." We'd never break the veil. It was just to be weird, you know?

CTJ: What can you tell me about the Sonic Temple, where you guys recorded your albums?

CK: We recorded in this Masonic temple our record label bought for Wonderland's operations—Wonderland being a boutique

division of Word Records. Forty-thousand square feet of space, and based in Elgin, Illinois. We took the third floor and converted it into our studio. It had a *giant* Egyptian room, painted from ceiling to floor to look like Egypt. We built the control rooms in there, and it was crazy.

CTJ: Oh my. So it was a Masonic temple, and then you guys transformed into the Sonic Temple—that’s the kind of wordplay I love, man.

CK: You got it! And down on the first floor, there was a 1,200-seat ballroom with a wrap-around balcony that looked like the Fillmore West. It had a huge stage and primo acoustics. Because of that, the Wonderland Ballroom became *the* stop for all the Christian alternative bands for four or five years.

After we shut down the label, we sold the building to the church next door. The guy who was the youth pastor there was the promoter for most of the shows we did. He and his church bought that building and took it over. Last time I was in town and looked at it, it looked dark like they had shuttered it and were doing some remodeling. We sold it in 2000, so it’s been awhile.

CTJ: If you don’t mind me asking, how many copies did each *Under Midnight* album sell? I can find no records of this anywhere. I’m guessing this meant it never went gold, platinum, or diamond.

MR: Ha! By any serious standards, those records didn’t sell too great. By indie standards though, they did quite well. The label used to give me sales reports till I asked where my royalties were—then they stopped! The first record did 30,000 units or so. The second one, which I think was way better, got a lot less support from the parent label, and that was that.

CTJ: Why industrial music? Did you just have a deep, abiding love for it? And what bands influenced *Under Midnight*’s sound?

MR: Honestly, Wonderland needed to fill a quota. The parent label required them to put out a certain amount of records a year. Caesar approached me and said to come up with something I really wanted to do, and that’s how we started. I’d been sampling and programming for years at that point—just for fun—and saw industrial music as the new punk rock.

Any sound you could find could become a musical instrument or voice. You didn’t need a band. I just loved the idea of it.

My big influences were Einstürzende Neubauten, Test Dept, Throbbing Gristle, Current 93—that kind of thing. But Ministry’s *Land of Rape and Honey* and the first Nine Inch Nails record seemed really innovative by introducing heavy guitars to industrial music.

Sadly, that sound was quickly adopted by bands I just cannot stand, and it sounded like jock metal with sampled beats and whatnot. Caesar and I were rarely on the same page, musically speaking, which made things rough, but probably more interesting, to be fair. I really don’t know! He liked Bon Jovi and INXS and I really could never relate to that stuff, being a lifelong art fag.

CK: I gotta’ be honest with you—what was blowin’ our sails full

was that first Nine Inch Nails record and certain Ministry cuts. I was also listening to the Jesus and Mary Chain—

CTJ: See, I always thought *Under Midnight* sounded like an industrial version of the Jesus and Mary Chain. Not like *Psychocandy*, obviously—with all of that paint-peeling feedback—but their later stuff, which still featured drum machines. The songwriting reminded me of them, too.

MR: I think the “common ground” bands were Ministry, Meat Beat Manifesto, and Front 242.

CTJ: So who did what in the band?

MR: We both wrote and sang. Most of the material was co-written. He did all of the engineering and I did most of the programming and sampling. I sang more than he did, but I’d have to hear the songs again to tell you who sang what. We also brought in Beki Hemingway to sing some—I’m not sure she’s ever forgiven me for that! Kurt Bachman from Believer also played guitar.

Beki Hemingway: (It was a) new adventure. I hadn’t ever sung any industrial music, and I definitely hadn’t played a character on an album before. I sang backup for Larry Norman and The Stand, and for a jangly college rock band—that was my experience up to that point. I joined This Train around the time of the recording of the (first) *Under Midnight* project.

My exposure to that genre was very limited. I had Ministry’s early New Wave stuff on some mix tapes high school friends made me, and I was vaguely familiar with Skinny Puppy, but I didn’t pay much attention.

The singing itself didn’t seem so out of character. I loved it that those guys wanted me to come out of my shell and be loud!

CTJ: Tell me about the process of making an *Under Midnight* record. Did the albums have lengthy incubation times, or did you write them relatively rapidly?

CK: We would work eighteen-hour days for four or six weeks straight, and those records would be created entirely in that time. Because we weren’t a band that had nothing else going on but that—I was producing about a record a month during those years. The average time in the studio is about a month. You had a month to record and mix, which is pretty good.

In our case, when it came to that first *Under Midnight* record, it also had to be written in that month. So our first record went real fast. We probably worked on *Void* for two to three months, I think. We had a little bit of time to write and really dig for cooler samples. We would spend hours just watching bad movies, just looking for a line or a noise.

MR: Obviously, we wore out *Blade Runner* on that first record! I sampled a lot of *Lawnmower Man*, because that movie sounded great, but was a pretty crappy film. I wanted to see if you could sample bad acting! *Aliens* was another one. The big budget sci-fi movies had such great sounds. I watched I don’t know how many movies, looking for interesting sounds.

CK: We would sit and read *Wired* magazine, looking for weird

phrases. We would sit in the studio and just read through those and look for terminology or threads of fear within the culture and wonder, “What would be the Christian Gospel response to that if there is one? And if there isn’t one, should there be?” So yeah, it wasn’t all just noise. We thought about it.

CTJ: When I heard your records as a teenager, it seemed to me that Frankie and dB Allen were futurist theologians who were trying to figure out what being a Christian looked like in a world where technology has altered the human story in fundamental ways.

It’s been 20 years since your self-titled debut was released, so we are living in the future—at least as your 1992-self might have thought of it. How does that future measure up to your expectations? Do you think there are elements of our present day and age that make Under Midnight’s records seem prophetic?

MR: I think it’s exactly the way we envisioned it, but not because we were so smart. Orwell and Huxley saw all of this years before we were born. Things are moving along more or less the way it appeared they would back then. The cautionary side of those records is still the same: Be careful what you wish for.

Prophetic would be a very generous thing to say about those records. Maybe you had to be there, but the church was very concerned with virtual reality, the World Wide Web, all that stuff. And I was reading tons of cyberpunk and futurist writing. The concept seemed pretty obvious to me at the time. Think of Under Midnight as the evangelical soundtrack to *Blade Runner*. That’s the easiest way to describe it.

CTJ: Has Under Midnight ever received due credit for inventing “cyberbilly” with the song “Oh Boy”?

MR: Caesar really wanted to fuse electronics with rockabilly. It had been done before us but not so over the top. I dunno. Should we receive credit for that? Seems like a dubious honor! It was just an idea, and it was fun to do so we did it.

CK: Cyberbilly! I so enjoyed producing that song that it almost took over things. I was like, “Oh man, I just want to do *this!* I want my agent to go license Beach Boys tracks and all this old, cool rockabilly and surf stuff, and I just want to cyber it all up! That would just be so fun! I think we can get a dance hit out of it!”

CTJ: What prompted you to write and record such a song?

CK: I love rockabilly and always have, and love the really campy old beach movies that had rockabilly bands playing in the background, wearing suits and junk. So I was searching out samples one day, and I just started dropping some of these rockabilly licks over some heavier beats. Then I played the guitars on there that aren’t loops of other things.

“Oh Boy!” is a reference to Buddy Holly’s song “Oh Boy!” While Elvis is the king of rock ‘n’ roll, when it came that whole sort of *twang* it was all about Buddy. So “Oh Boy!” just sort of became a nod to that. It didn’t really fit the story arc, but we made it fit the story arc.

It’s a sonic mess. It’s so layered. But it’s a beautiful mess. It just

came out of playing with rockbilly samples and finding that many of them were in the same key, and then stretching their time signatures to fit. And no one had done it.

CTJ: I remember reading at one time that there were plans to release a cyberpunk novel that corresponded with the Under Midnight albums. After 1994, I never heard another word about this. What would this book have been like?

MR: It would have been a Gibson-esque graphic novel. A dear friend of mine, Troy Moody, did the libretto for *Void*, based on our suggestions. He did a much better job than we could’ve. Sadly, Troy fell into a serious alcoholism problem that ultimately took his life. Losing Troy in such a sad, senseless way killed my desire to move forward on the project.

CTJ: Under Midnight went silent after the release of *Void* in 1994. Why?

MR: Everything has a shelf life, you know? The funding was gone and Caesar and I weren’t really working together any longer. The project sort of killed itself.

A label approached me about doing something and I did a three or four song demo that never got released. It was called Saltbox. It was okay. Again, I had a label breathing down my neck to make it more commercial. I can’t really do that, even though I’ve written “hits.” It just didn’t interest me.

By then I was playing full time with Rich Mullins and This Train. I had full creative control in This Train, which felt pretty awesome. I was also into exploring American Roots music by then. I’ve done tons of electronic stuff for TV, but not as an artist—should I?

CTJ: Thom Wolfe designed the art for your records. I thought it was just outstanding, and it was what made me buy the first Under Midnight album, in fact. How did he end up on your radars?

CK: Thom was this college kid with Flock of Seagulls hair that was working at one of the smallest Christian bookstores in Lane County, Illinois, when I was a salesman for Refuge Records and I was on the road. Thom was the only cool guy there. It was this old “blue hair” kind of Christian gift store—I lived pretty close to it—and they just happened to have some music in the corner.

I found out that he was an art student in college, so I said, “I don’t know anything about art, but we’ve got this little label, and we need people who can design album covers. Can you do that?” So he designed the first Flock 14 album cover with tape and blue pencils on my dining room table. I hired Thom from that, and he became our designer.

I remember when Thom sold his personal music gear—he pawned it—to buy his first Macintosh. I said “Why did you *do* that, bro?” He’s like, “Because this is how it’s going, man. Design happens on computers now.” “I’m like, ‘Are you sure it’s worth selling your gear for?’” But he knew.

He basically lived in this little dinky apartment and pawned everything to get this Mac and started designing on the computer, and immediately things got better looking. I hired him out of obscurity from a Christian bookstore and probably paid him even

less, and we became very good friends.

MR: Thom was a huge fan of Vaughan Oliver at that time. Gosh, what a gifted artist he is! Thom was a good friend. I actually introduced him to his wife.

The label made Thom pull back a bit on the gross stuff. The original design for *Void* was way more gross and awesome, but the label really put the pressure on us to back that down. It featured nudity in a very graphic, violent way. I thought it was amazing, but not so much to a CCM label!

I lost touch with Thom when he left Chicago, but he was a very dear friend. He did the artwork for the first two *This Train* records, too. We're fortunate we found him before he got famous. Within a few years there would have been no way we could have afforded him!

CTJ: Did any secular industrial artists provide feedback about the *Under Midnight* records? Also, did you feel supported by your Christian contemporaries?

MR: I don't recall any secular feedback one way or the other.

As far as support from our Christian peers? No. I was friends with Wally from Deitiphobia and Scott from Circle of Dust. They could barely hide their contempt for *Under Midnight*! We had talked about doing an industrial "supergroup" with me, Scott, and Wally, but R. E. X. pulled the funding out from under us at the last minute. Circle of Dust made the best industrial records in the CCM scene by a mile, and he knew it. That guy was way ahead of the rest of us. Wally was close, but didn't really have the studio chops or budgets to pull it off.

The technology still wasn't there to be able to do DIY stuff with the kind of quality you need to sell records, and UM had a *huge* advantage. The first record took four months of full-time work to make.

(CTJ Notes to Himself: Hmm. Mark says four months. Caesar says one month. Who is right?)

That's a lot of studio time. We had the best studio, the best gear, and the biggest budgets, but I don't feel we came close to what Circle of Dust did, artistically.

CTJ: Caesar, you're actively involved in ministry now. What exactly do you do? How does your current work relate, if at all, to your days as a producer and musician?

CK: I love music as much as ever, but I don't have time to practice my craft anymore. My wife is always encouraging it, but I think it's a bygone chapter.

I'm an author now, and a speaker. It all has to do with church-planting stuff. My whole life is about helping people start and form missional communities.

I've written three books in the last six months. There's *The Gospel Primer*. Then there's *Transformed*, which I wrote for Zondervan for the general market. Then last week I wrote a little ebook called *Not the Church*—it's just ten simple little iPad drawings and conversations. It takes discipleship and this whole missional

conversation thing and makes it stupid-simple.

I'm on the road half the time. Fifty percent of my life I'm not at home, which is tough. But I'm out developing other communities. It's amazing.

CTJ: What are you doing these days musically, Mark?

MR: For the past eleven or twelve years I've been playing with the *Legendary Shackshakers*, which has been awesome—we have one of the best frontmen of all time. Most of my other work is all upright bass, which is strange, but that's what seems to interest folks about me as a player at this point.

I have a side thing called *Prayer Flag* where I play electric bass. It's noisy, artsy dance music in a late '70s post-punk kinda' vein. I'd like to pursue that a bit more, maybe do some *This Train* stuff, and if I do an electronic record again, it'll most likely be solo, or *Saltbox*.

I can't believe after all these years I still get to make so much music. Life is good.

CTJ: Would you ever consider making a third *Under Midnight* record?

CK: We actually were working on a third *Under Midnight* record at one point—it was going to be much broader musically. There were horns and crazy acoustic stuff. We wanted to have a live drum kit playing through most of it on top of all the sequencing.

MR: Ha! Caesar and I toyed with the idea maybe ten years ago, but it really wasn't meant to be.

I think we've ripped off *Blade Runner* enough for one lifetime!

Visit Caesar on the web at www.caesarkalinowski.com, and follow him on Twitter: @CaesarKal. Visit Mark Robertson at facebook.com/legendaryshackshakers, and follow him on Twitter: @theshackshakers.



This Band Is Our House: The Story of Adam Again

By: Todd Zeller

There are chance meetings, taking chances, second chances and reasons for the impossible to happen. Some of the reasons can become clear right then in that single moment of brevity that speaks to your soul. Some of the reasons and answers we seek for understanding do not come until years have passed and clarity comes with age, wisdom, hindsight and knowledge. And sometimes we never discover the reasons of why in this brief lifetime that is only a vapor.

The desert continues to breathe life into existence even amidst the harshest of conditions, where a flourishing life seems but a miracle. Relationships we all have within our lives, they come and they go, passing us, embracing us, pardoning us, and flooding over us like the seas that push water upon its sands over and over and over again.

There is music in the atmosphere of life, music that causes us to wrestle like Jacob wrestled the angel, only we wrestle with ourselves, we fight our Maker for a few grains of concrete truth, music that moves a stubborn heart to action, music that haunts us and lingers like a familiar ghost stretched across our skins like a warm blanket. With that music travels a voice golden, familiar, dulcet and low, speaking deep into the heart of this listener. God knows music can stir the soul, and for me that stirring came in 1985 when I discovered a band called Adam Again.

By some grand design, it seems I have been made the keeper of the flame, the historian and archivist of a band whose music I admire, respect and adore. There have been so many parallels to my own life along the way between the songs that Gene Eugene and Greg Lawless would write, the lyrics of hope, desperation, love, passion, family, heart break, crumbling marriages, deserts ripe with disappointment, authentic urban landscapes filled with struggle, and oceans that redeem and wash away the madness and chaos we carry on our skin. This is the legacy of Adam Again for me.

It has been nearly 17 years since my friendship with Greg and the band began. Though my own life has been riddled with many trials, be it health, financial and marital I have always believed in our little underground film, that has gone through a few title changes, rough cuts, highs and lows of its own. We decided it is a MUST to complete the film for the fans of Adam Again and the



amazing group of artists that are the extended Adam Again family. The music of Adam Again still stands head and shoulders above so many of their musical peers. Now that we have lost two of the founding members of the band, Gene in 2000 and more recently Paul Valadez. This feature length documentary begs to be no longer abandoned but finished strong.

This Band Is Our House is set to tell the compelling story of the band from its early inception in the 80's on the cusp of the new wave synth movement with a group of high school friends. Friends who were equally skilled in sharing their collective life experiences through the power of song. The marriage that formed between band members in Gene and Michele, that eventually became much of the heart wrenching subject matter of the final two Adam Again records that so many of us still relate to in a potent way. Though many of the interviews with various artists were shot back in 2000, the content and raw emotion is fresh and relevant as friends of the band, processed the loss of a friend, a mentor, a studio player, a band mate, a family member. There is lovely footage of Adam Again with Gene, Greg, Jon and stand in bassist Keith Schnieder rehearsing for Cornerstone 1997 in Oregon, in contrast with the rehearsal footage of the surviving members of Adam Again in Nashville TN preparing to take the Gallery Stage at Cornerstone 2000, sans their beloved leader and front man Gene Eugene Andrusco. The film includes stripped down instrumentation of intimate hotel room preparations with Michael Knott, Michael Roe, Andrew Prickett and Adam Again. And of course the pinnacle is the Cornerstone 2000 Gene Eugene Tribute Show.

Todd A. Zeller | Eden Z Films

...Just to chip in my two cents here and mention a couple of noteworthy things...Down the Line did a unique tribute issue of Gene Eugene in March of 2009. It was a special issue to put together with Matt, and it was fun to speak to so many different friends and family members of Gene's. It made me realize how much more I missed the art of Gene Eugene than I thought I did. For me personally, there are such varied emotions attached to so many memories of Adam Again albums and songs. Adam Again was a unique band, and Gene Eugene was a one of a kind artist. The documentary is going to be solid, it is an amazing collection of

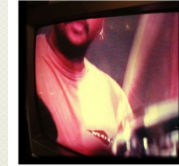
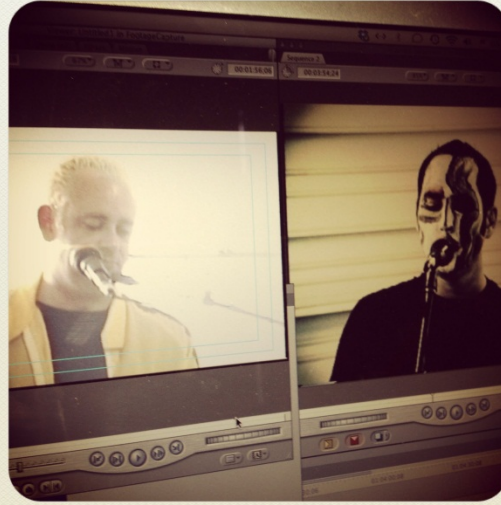
stuff never released before that tells a story of one of the most original bands in the scene, and shows how much the music community, friends and fans alike, was really impacted by the tragic passing of Gene. Michael Gerard Knott, one of Gene's dearest friends, will be narrating the project.

There is a Kickstarter that is coming soon to help fund the finishing, you won't be disappointed with the outcome. As a fan who has seen a bunch of the raw footage, it is incredible stuff that is high quality and professional, and it truly gives a rare glimpse into a pioneering band that brightened the musical landscape. Adel Mesenheimer (who heads up Frontline Music Group) has been a big help in helping overcome the challenges of the music licensing, and Gene's Mom Carole as well as his Dad continue to be supportive and enthusiastic about the film.

Once the Kickstarter launches there will be some super cool "one of a kind" reward options, so make sure you join and "like" the Adam Again Facebook page, that way you can keep up with all the updates. This one has been a long time in the making, so let's support this project with everything we can!

Steve Ruff

<http://www.facebook.com/adam.again>





Adel Mesenheimer – Frontline Records “Paying It Forward”

When I approached Adel about doing this interview, I told her that I wanted to come at it from the angle of the whole issue about file sharing...not that the whole discussion can be hammered out, but I feel the divisiveness of “people who take” and “people who purchase” gets a new spin on it when the answers are coming from a small label owner and her label caters to the “Christian” music scene. It was facilitated by me browsing a Christian music site that offered free bootlegs. I was curious as to their reasoning in giving away what is available to purchase, but they only gave one small thread to that issue and it was difficult to even find. What incensed me were some of the absolutely ignorant comments that were left about why these folks felt they deserved the music for free. Now, I have a very limited idea of what it takes to make an album, especially a studio released recording that is marketed and sold, but I have a decent understanding of what it costs many of the people and bands we cover here at DTL.

The website I was reading had albums for free from friends and artists I know, and I know that they live hand to mouth, always teetering on the line of paying a bill or losing a utility service. One of the albums being given away actually has my name on the credits, not because I funded the whole venture, but because I did contribute to the making of the album, as did several other people listed. It wasn't a Kickstarter fund raising, it wasn't cheap, it wasn't easy for any of us to put the money in to see the thing come to fruition, but it was well worth the investment in the band and hearing a great album released from someone that we loved and have followed their music career for decades.

To read comments on this unnamed website about how these “artists can give a little because they're out sailing on their boats and making a bunch of money off of people” were ridiculous to read...the anger rose as I read how people said, “I bought albums from them before so I've already paid them money”, and the ignorance of the whole notion was not something I could dismiss just because people didn't understand the industry. People who feel entitled will always find a way to convince themselves they

should have something that doesn't belong to them...the guy who steals cable off the neighbor, the neighbor who is hacking someone else's WIFI, the person who orders water and takes soda, etc. etc. etc. What I can't wrap my head around is that in the “Christian” community we even have this debate.

Obviously Christians don't agree on everything, and it's good to argue pro-life vs. pro-choice, evolution vs. creationism, gun rights, legalization of marijuana, politics and everything in between, but we shouldn't have to argue about stealing. Thou shalt not steal...pretty simple, what's to discuss? Nobody walks into a record store and steal a record, just cause someone sits at their computer and nobody sees them they feel some obligation to help themselves? It isn't a gray issue...at all. When I helped my friend make that record, my wife and I gave and it wasn't extra money we had lying around, we don't have that luxury. One of the comments went as far as to say that, “if an artist can't make ends meet when people file share, they should go and get a “real” job.” What a ridiculous thing to say. It's not just ignorant, it's an elevated sense of gimmee gimmee from a self-serving, intellectually challenged, mentally stunted thief.

I know it will never change, I just always think people with a hard-nosed intent to follow a set of morals and values, would understand that taking what doesn't belong to you is theft...period. I could try and change someone's mind with stats from the IPR, I could appeal to their sense of sympathy, I could quote scripture and beg for logic and an open mind, but that would be a waste. There is always someone out there just waiting to steal your sh*t!

This interview is about the person who resurrected a game changing record label, a person who has re-released music that we love and grew up with in an attempt to give back to the artists, and the fans. Fortunately there are people out there in the music industry that want to give and not just take.

When was Frontline Records started and who were the people that started one of the most innovative eclectic labels in the Christian industry?

Frontline Records was founded in 1985 in Orange County, California by Jimmy Kempner. He was, among other things, a Saturday night concert evangelist at Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa. The company hired local recording artists, producers and other professionals. Its roster included some recognizable folks: Brian Tong, Mike MacLane, Ed McTaggart, Mike Delaney, Tony Shore, Terry Taylor, Scott Blackwell, Tim Miner, Sean Michael Black and Thom Roy. Since my roots in the Christian music industry began in 1979 at Maranatha! Music, an outreach of Calvary Chapel, I knew several members of the executive team.

Where did your affiliation with the label come into play, and what were the reasons for wanting to revive the label? Does Frontline Records still own the rights to everyone that was originally released on the label, and do you have a list of who that is?

My opportunity to revive the label came about through work for Buddy Killen, who purchased Frontline in 1989 for Killen Music Group. Buddy hired me to manage licensing and royalties for another KMG label prior to the purchase, and then commissioned me to manage them for the newly acquired catalog. Sadly, Buddy passed away of cancer in 2006. In 2010 my company, Meis Music

Group, had the opportunity to manage, and later purchase, KMG Records label and its publishing affiliates from his estate. All original Frontline artists included in the sale to KMG were in tack, with the exception of one. These legacy trendsetters are featured on our website: <http://www.FrontlineRecords.us>.

From your point of view what was the defining characteristics of the label that set it apart and gave it the longevity that it has had?

Frontline artists have made a mark in the history of Christian music that is still positively impacting our world. Most were some of the earliest performers of rock, metal, ska, hip-hop, rap, alternative and electric dance styles in the contemporary Christian music scene.

These young radicals effectively communicated their faith in Jesus Christ, questioned society, challenged the Church, and had a blast doing it. As Christ-followers, they appreciated the fact that the opportunity to reach people and feed their souls was like a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away (James 4:14). So they wrote and performed with excellence in Spirit and Truth. And the universe benefited.

A label is a business and having that business in a “Christian” market presents complicated challenges from every angle. What are some of the greatest hurdles that you face, and how do you go about handling those in the age of file sharing?

The label had been inactive since 2002 when KMG’s distributor folded and the label went down with it. Over 300 albums had never been distributed digitally (legally). So the first item of business was to get the music out on iTunes, Amazon and other digital sites. Syntax Distribution in San Diego, California facilitated that beautifully in fall of 2010. We use social media, a radio program “*Frontline Records Rewind*”, and samplers to help people discover the music for the first time and to inform original fans that it is available again. I am pleased to report that fans have responded and continue to purchase digital downloads, though revenue is moderate. As a small record label owner, I maintain a gig managing licensing and royalties for label clients to pay bills. Getting to know the artists and working to bring their music back into focus is pure joy for me.

People often ask if we are breaking new artists or producing new albums. The answer is, “there is no budget for that”. A couple years ago at a Syntax/Central South Distribution clinic, it was stated that it requires at least \$40,000 to promote and market a new artist or album in the Gospel market. In major mainstream markets that number is closer to \$1 million. Ninety percent of new releases financed by labels don’t even recoup or break even.

The kicker is: online piracy of entertainment content keeps soaring. A recent study by NetNames, a British brand protection firm, reported that in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific in January of this year alone, 327 million unique users illegally sought copyrighted content, generating 14 billion page views on piracy sites. An article in Trichordist relayed that there are 7.4 billion views on illegal websites that use peer-to-peer distribution, giving away copies of music, film, books and games. Imagine if peers shared iTunes links of their favorite music.

It makes one wonder what would happen if 14 billion views were

on legal websites. Perhaps creators, producers, labels and investors would be rewarded for their efforts and contribution to our universe. Perhaps they could give up their “day job” and produce more enjoyment for the masses. Enough dreaming. Reality is that there aren’t many “middle class” artists. There are the few very successful ones, and the rest are poverty level. Not much in between. To hear stories of dedication and sacrifice by Christian artists on Frontline and other labels of that era, check out “*First and Forgotten*” by Jerry Wilson and “*Through My Windows*” by Soup The Chemist.

What is maddening is that the only organization making money through piracy is the illegal site. Not only do they pay nothing for distributed goods, but gain revenue by selling advertisement and even subscriptions.

According to recent surveys, more than 70% of unsigned artists would like a recording contract. Record labels are the primary investors in artists. In fact a recent article by Trichordist reported that record labels are spending \$4.5 billion a year on A&R and marketing artists. Tragically, according to Nielsen SoundScan, legitimate online download sales are down 3% for tracks and 6% for albums so far this year. Most artists state that streaming and subscription royalties from Spotify and others have yet to boost royalty earnings in a substantial manner. As a royalty specialist, I can attest to that.

Some people assume these folks are rich and won’t miss revenue from a P2P or no-fee site. But when one person joins the other 327 million monthly free users, there is a painful impact. Last month author, Philip Pullman, wrote an article in which he described illegal downloading being comparable with stealing someone’s wallet out of their pocket. Then he offered an opinion poll asking, “Is illegal downloading theft?”. 31% said “yes”; 69% “no”. Turns out I am in the minority, a member of a dying group who believes if we enjoy someone’s work, personal investment and unique talent, we should reward them and pay for it.

Check out their website here...and give, don’t steal!

<http://www.frontlinerecords.us/>





Interview with Bram Cools.

By Mike Indest

The newest addition to the Down The Line Collective is Bram Cools. Bram describes himself as an eclectic singer-songwriter from Belgium with lo-fi roots, somewhere in between weird folk, electro-acoustic noise and christian antifolk.

However you slice it, the man writes some killer tunes.

Since Bram is the newest addition, I thought a few questions would be in order to get to know Bram and see what makes him tick.

Bram, I'm really glad you are part of the Collective. I have really been enjoying your songs both musically and lyrically. One of your projects available on BandCamp is called I am the Belgian Christian lo-fi scene!. Besides being a great album is this a tongue-in-cheek title? Is there a Christian music scene at all in Belgium or in actuality are you the entire Christian music scene?

That's a 'best of'-compilation I made when I ran out of my older home-made CD-R's, and it seemed a fitting title. It's just a compilation of some of my best-liked songs of earlier times, with the addition of some weird instrumentals and sound experiments.

There surely isn't a Christian lo-fi scene in Belgium, in the sense that no-one is playing lo-fi music with Christian influences deliberately... Belgium is a very secular post-catholic country with less than 2% Protestants and evangelicals, so the whole evangelical world is extremely small, but there is a very small Christian music scene although there's not much bands on a professional level. Most Christian music is imported from the Netherlands though, where there's a much bigger scene, or just straight from the US... Contemporary Christian Music is mostly heavily US-dominated anyway in this part of Europe.

Christian rock as a concept is completely unknown to most Belgians anyway, but on the other hand there are some more alternative Christian bands that are relatively popular in

alternative circles, like 16 Horsepower and now Wovenhand, or Sufjan Stevens.

Who are your musical influences?

I've always listened to a lot of musical styles, and I seem to tend to blend a lot of influences together when I come up with my arrangements... But often there is a simple song underneath all the layers of multitrack and noise that can be easily played with voice and guitar, and those tend to be some kind of folksy or dissonant rock tunes.

As a teenager I was a big fan of Bob Dylan and U2, as well as Nirvana and The Cranberries, and even Dire Straits as well as alternative Belgian bands like dEUS and Zita Swoon. Maybe I can add Larry Norman and 16 Horsepower to that too, but I don't know if any real CCM band has influenced me that much in those years (maybe DC talk's 'Jesus freak' that I listened to a lot as a teenager?) Later I discovered the worship-noise of the early Soul-Junk, and The Danielson Famile which did have a big impact on my music, as well as Sufjan Stevens, the Icelandic band Sigur Ros and Spinvis from Holland. I can also add Daniel Johnston, Portishead, the Innocence Mission, the Psalters, and Mewithoutyou. But honestly, I can't say what influenced me most of the time, except in certain songs or parts of songs with a very peculiar influence.

You mention on your BandCamp page you are not in this to make money. What is your reason for making music?

I never thought of a reason, I just make music. If I would make music as part of some kind of plan to make money and get famous I would do something completely different... I am very well aware that neither my voice nor my style of music are fit for a general radio audience, and that's not where I'm aiming at. I just like to make the music that I want to make, sometimes because there are things that I want to tell through the lyrics, sometimes because I want to experience with sounds or with chords and melodies.

And I'm always glad when I hear from people when they enjoy it or are touched by a certain song. Even with a small audience it seems like sometimes people are really touched, and I think that's why I

never stopped making music.

Your lyrics very blatantly come from a Christian perspective, do you consider your music an outreach or ministry?

I wouldn't use those words, but it probably can be seen like that in a way. I am a Christian, even after years of struggling with what I believe in, and that's a very important part of me that will come out when I write or perform songs. Music is always communicating something, and connecting to something, and something very personal to me, so I think it would be very strange if I would be able to hide something as important as my faith when I play music.

Some of my songs are worship or gospel songs, and I won't hide that whoever is in the audience. So there might even be a 'liturgical' component to it that just comes naturally and that hasn't been thought out.

I've seen a couple of pictures of you playing live, do you play live a lot? Do you play mostly for Christian or non-Christian audiences?

Not at the moment, but I hope to be playing live again more in the future. I stopped playing when my father unexpectedly died in February 2012, and I had already slowed down a lot because of the time that goes into work and a family with small kids, and because I don't have much band members left at the moment.

Some years ago we had a band called the 'Contemporary Christian Muzak Collective' (CCMC) for the more experimental indie/noise worship-like songs. I think there are some really crude videos of our first show on YouTube. But then everybody did get kids and the didgeridoo-player moved to Sweden and everything fell apart...

One of my problems has always been how to translate my endless layers of multitrack to a live setting, be it with songs in which I play 10 layers of instrument or weird electronic experiments, so generally I end up with more stripped-down or more simple indie-rock live versions.

As for the audience I must say I generally like non-Christian or mixed audiences most. I've had some very bad experiences with playing with the CCM collective for Christian teenagers with a 'here we are now, entertain us' attitude that were not interested at all in our music. It seems that some Christians are just looking for safe entertainment, and not for something that has any kind of challenging content. And I'm not the person who can deliver such a thing...

For the gearheads out there, what is your recording setup?

Well, I started out with taped and minidisc and very lo-fi stuff, and have always tried to do as much with as less as possible... A laptop and a TASCAM recording device with some microphones are often all I use, sometimes borrowed mics to have a better effect.

The electronica of the more recent stuff is another story. I usually have the tendency to fool around on as much instruments as I can get my hands on even if I don't really play them, but when we had our first baby, I didn't have much chance to fool around with instruments, and so I started to experiment more with all kinds of electronic sounds that could just be done with the laptop and

headphones, and I downloaded a lot of free VSTi's of all kinds to experiment with, which ended up in the electronic sounds of '[cyberluddism](#)' and '[Instant pocket apocalypse](#)', but even here I couldn't keep myself from going back to mixing real instruments into it wherever I could. But the orchestral sounds that you can hear in '[byte of my byte, pixel of my pixel](#)' for example are just a free mellotron-imitating VSTi and the piano-roll of Linux multimedia studio...

You are very direct and sometimes seemingly personally very vulnerable lyrically, is that a conscious way of writing songs or is it just what comes out?

I don't know, it generally just happens that way I think. There's no plan behind it, but I think it's just because I make the music that needs to come out sometimes...

Why sing in English?

That's a good question. Probably the main reason is the Anglo-Saxon hegemony in the Western entertainment industry. English is the natural language of music and film here in Flanders even if it's not our language. Tom Barman of the Belgian alternative rock band dEUS has said once that English is the language of rock'n roll, and 90% or so of the music on the radio is not in Dutch but in English over here in Flanders... The last 2 albums *cyberluddism* and the *Instant Pocket Apocalypse* EP were in English, but I do write and sing in Dutch or in the local Flemish dialect too - which differs a bit from standard Dutch as a spoken language, and I have even used liturgical Latin and Greek in the past. It's even possible that I will make some songs in a self-invented language in the future. Two of my most-played and popular live songs are in Dutch ('[doos vol cornflakes](#)' & '[dood aan de graankorrel](#)'), both on *I am the Belgian Christian lo-fi scene*) and there's a whole collection of songs in Flemish that I need to finish.

What's up next?

There's actually a lot of music that needs to be finished, and I hope to do some live shows again in the future, although I might have to find a band again too for that.

I need to finish an album I started recording years ago called *Happy Christian music for the conservative middle class*, which will have a BandCamp release. I also have a collection of almost finished songs from the 'contemporary Christian muzak' era that I want to release, as well as the beginning of an album that's completely in Flemish.

Thanks again, do you have any parting words?

Thanks for being an audience. What I would say is that everyone should sing his or her own song. There's only one person who can do it. Don't be ashamed if it's not what everybody wants to hear, and don't just sing what you think everybody wants to hear, there really is enough of that already in the world. And don't forget that we're made in the image of the creator God, so it might be good to take our creativity serious...

You can listen to Bram's music @ bramcools.bandcamp.com/

Hell and Heavy Metal, we have found the connection!

An Interview with Dr. Glenn Peoples by Mike Indest

I have recently become a fan of Dr. Glenn Peoples. Glenn is a contributor to Rethinking Hell rethinkinghell.com and also hosts the podcast and writes the blog found at rightreason.org.

Dr. Peoples and the team at Rethinking Hell are Evangelical Christians who believe and defend conditional mortality. They believe the Bible does not teach that the soul is inherently immortal and that well, the soul that sinneth shall surely die.

For me growing up in fundamentalist churches the idea of Hell as eternal conscious torment was a given. It was also a given that one way to find yourself there is by listening to rock music, especially heavy metal! When I found out that Dr. Peoples was also responsible for the kick ass theme song for Rethinking Hell and several other podcasts I laughed out loud. I also could hear (in my head) the fundamentalist preachers from my youth making a connection between the music and being deceived by the lie of denying Hell.

So I thought it would be interesting to see if Dr. Peoples is really deceived and if possibly the heavy metal music was the deception that lead to this heretical view of Hell or did this erroneous view of Hell lead him to heavy metal. So with fear and trembling, here we go!

Did you always believe in conditional mortality or did you ever believe in Hell as eternal conscious torment?

Great to talk to you Mike! No, I certainly didn't always see things this way. I was raised in the Catholic Church and until I was into my teenage years I had begun to form what I would consider very standard, orthodox Catholic views about things because of the teaching I received: Our souls don't die but our bodies do, and when you die (I would have said that the soul was really "you," so I didn't *really* think that "you die," but you know what I mean) your soul goes to purgatory, heaven, or hell. I believed in the resurrection too. It was part of the creed but I never really heard much talk about it.

When I first heard that there was another way that some Christians thought about hell, and that they didn't believe in eternal torment but they thought that some people would die forever and that would be the end of them, I didn't want to accept it. It ran contrary to everything I had thought about hell for my whole life and I had never heard an alternative view mentioned. I rejected it outright until somebody lent me a book that explored this point of view and – quite in spite of myself – I at least came to accept that it was a serious possibility. I was about seventeen at that stage I think. After that I didn't rush out and become a crusader for this view, but over the next few years as I revisited what the Bible had to say about it more and more, I became convinced.

It seems that sometimes non-traditional views are really derived from extra biblical sources or some mixture of odd belief systems. For example - At Johns church they are foot washing,

Calvinist, post millennial, dual rapture followers of a 16th century snake handling mystic, so obviously they don't baptize red heads. Is your view a combination of outside belief systems you are imposing onto the Bible or can your view of conditional mortality be derived sola Scriptura?

I'm often struck, actually, by the way that some Evangelicals approach not just this subject, but virtually any subject in theology, where they will say something like "Well here's one view that these Christians over here hold, and there's another view that those Christians over there hold, but I prefer to just go with what the Bible says," as though believing the Bible is something that never occurs to people in other traditions. All of us within the broadly conservative, orthodox Christian faith think that our beliefs reflect what the Bible teaches, or at least we hope they do. At the same time, we're all influenced by social and cultural factors whether we wish to be or not, and I think the modern Evangelical culture has a huge influence on the way a lot of Evangelicals think about hell and on their conviction that the traditional view of hell is biblical – after all, there's a large, loud and massed published Evangelical culture all around them saying that it's biblical, so it must be! The truth is that it's very hard to know the degree to which cultural, social, historical etc factors have influenced the way we read Scripture.

That being said, I think the biblical evidence for conditional immortality is simply overwhelming, and the only reason I came to adopt this view is that I was struck by that evidence, and also by the realisation that it was tradition, rather than Scripture, that had led me to hold the mainstream view. A lot of Christians assume that everybody gets immortality, possibly because they think the soul is immortal. Augustine for example argued that since the soul or spirit can't be destroyed it makes sense to think that it can endure eternal suffering in hell without being destroyed. That's just one example of a widely held but unbiblical view entering Christian theology. People talk about those with alternative views like mine as though they're just caving in to some sort of emotional or cultural pressure, without really appreciating the huge cultural pressure within their Evangelical world and the wider Christian tradition to conform to what others think. We know what we're "supposed" to think so that's what we find in Scripture. How many times do people who believe in eternal torment gloss over biblical passages that talk about the wages of sin being death, or that warn of the destruction that God's enemies will face, or the promise that what God offers us in Christ is the only hope of having eternal life? This has all become part of the traditional vocabulary because it's in the Bible, but being so familiar with this terminology we just take these words as tokens of our familiar theology and we don't really let them speak. Death and destruction really means suffering and separation from God, and life means a special, higher quality of life. Of course that's not how we talk in everyday life, but somehow when talking about theology we forget that. I've come to think that in Scripture God did his darndest, using human instruments, to clearly express the fact that fallen human beings can only receive immortality through Christ, that one day all traces of evil will be no more, that God in Christ has taken away the death that we deserve, and that one day those who reject the gift of eternal life will be destroyed and gone forever because they don't have this gift. The evidence is sitting right there in the pages of Scripture from cover to cover, and yet with linguistic twists and turns we've done our darndest to make all of these biblical proclamations mean something else. I have to wonder sometimes just what the biblical writers would have

needed to say in order to convince some people. Would they need to say that the lost will die? They did! Would they need to say that they will be destroyed forever? They did! Would they need to say that they won't have life? They did! Would they need to compare them to weeds that are burned up and disposed of? They did! You get the idea. The Bible says everything that we would expect it to say if God wanted us to understand that his enemies would one day be gone forever.

So the short answer is yes, this is a point of view that can easily be supported on the basis of what Scripture teaches. The reason so many Christians don't accept this view is that they have already adopted so much that isn't in Scripture.

You hold a PhD in Philosophy and a Masters of Theology. Normally people who pursue these higher degrees want to work in an academic field. Your view on Hell would seem to close many doors for employment in Theological Institutions including Church work. Why not keep this view to yourself? Why do you think Hell is important enough to not just keep quiet about?

Honestly, I really never intended to get a name as somebody who talks about this, but I just couldn't help it! And you're right, there's no doubt that doing so means that a lot of doors are closed to me, professionally speaking, which is a bit of a shame. Of course that raises the question: Would I really want to work at a place that can't handle open discussion on this subject? Would that be liveable for someone who wants Christians to use their minds a little more? Probably not, but it does make me wonder how institutions like that can ever be improved if the people who might do the reforming are blocked from ever taking part.

So why do I do it? That's a good question, because I don't always think about why I do it. I just do. Maybe the fact that there is such a reaction from those who think differently shows that this issue needs to be kept in front of the Christian (and non-Christian) public. If Evangelicals are still in a place where they just can't accept that conditionalists really belong to the Evangelical fold – and there are still those who think this way, then they have to be continually challenged because that's not OK. Real Evangelicals are interested in revisiting cherished beliefs in light of Scripture when necessary.

Another reason is a love of the truth and the conviction that pursuing the truth and encouraging other Christians to do likewise is really good for us and for the church. If we just let this "slide," if we let Christians use bad methods of biblical interpretation on *this* issue (for example, thinking that the reference to worms and fire in Isaiah 66:24 indicates that hell is eternal torment, even though in context it obviously refers to the destruction of dead bodies), then we're reinforcing sloppy ways of thinking and of handling Scripture. We need to use the highest standards possible when we're talking about something that's not trivial, we're talking about what God has revealed. If people get into patterns of thinking and using Scripture that way on this issue, they're going to be doing it on other issues, and bad thinking and bad hermeneutics infects our thoughts about all sorts of issues that Scripture addresses. We're God's image bearers and we should want to do all things with excellence, especially when it comes to handling the word of God in Scripture.

Another reason is just the basic drive to tell the truth about God and about the Gospel. If the traditional view of hell is true, then that tells us in part what God is like. His justice demands endless suffering. His wrath is never satisfied. The Gospel is a message that is just as much about staying out of hell as getting into heaven. But in fact the Gospel is good news. On our own, we die. We can't live forever, we don't have immortality, we depend on God for our very being, and God has – not provided a plan A and a plan B, one in glory and one in agony – but provided a rescue. The Gospel isn't about better housing in eternity. It's about life and death.

This last point also provides an important response to a concern in apologetics, namely the challenge that a loving God wouldn't subject anybody to eternal suffering in hell. The good news here is that Scripture doesn't say that he will, so this is just an unnecessary stumbling block that

we can remove by showing people what Scripture really says about eternity.

So what is a Biblical definition of Hell?

The word "hell" itself has actually largely disappeared from the pages of the Bible. In older translations it was used to translate the Hebrew word *sheol* and its Greek translation, *hades* (not to be confused with the Greek god *Hades* or his underworld in mythology where the shades of the dead roamed). In better translations these words are usually translated into clearer English words like "the grave" or "the pit." But the main word of interest, the Greek word *gehenna*, refers to the final punishment or the final fate of those who are not saved. *Gehenna* was the Greek equivalent of a Hebrew term for the Valley of Hinnom, a place where idolatry and child sacrifice had taken place – a place that gained the name "valley of slaughter." Even when this word isn't used, the biblical writers still refer to the concept of final punishment or judgment a number of times. When they do, they make it very clear what they were trying to say. The best known verse in all of Scripture reminds us that through faith in Christ we will not "perish" but have eternal life. Jesus compares the last judgement to a scene where a farmer burns up weeds in a furnace. Although the punishment is certainly eternal (something defenders of the traditional view frequently point out), as St Paul points out when writing to the Thessalonians, it is not eternal torment but "everlasting destruction." In perhaps the most direct statement, Jesus warned his followers not to fear men who could just kill you in this life and that is all, but rather to fear God who can destroy both body and soul in *gehenna*.

Like all doctrines that are clearly taught in Scripture, this biblical concept of final punishment has some well-known passages that some people think create problems for it. For example, there are those who think that the book of Revelation was written, in part, to literally show us what hell looks like, a lake of fire that burns forever and where God's enemies will suffer forever. One of the main reasons that some people think this is that they're just not familiar with *apocalyptic* literature in the Bible, the type of literature you see in the book of Revelation. Virtually nothing that you see in these picturesque visions can be taken literally, at face value. Everywhere you look you find symbols, objects that refer to something else. Bowls of incense represent the prayers of the saints. Lampstands represent churches. The Lamb represents Jesus. The beasts represent world empires (drawn from the book of Daniel). The dragon represents the devil and so on. Similarly, the lake of fire represents "the second death," and not a literal lake of fire. In this vision John sees the dragon and the beasts being tormented forever in this lake, and yet when Daniel described the fate of the beast in the Old Testament, it was slain and its body was burned up with fire. This isn't a contradiction. The writer of Revelation was obviously aware of what Daniel had written and was making the same point. These are all highly figurative ways of expressing the same idea: That God will defeat all of his enemies and reign supreme. God will defeat death too, and death is cast into the lake of fire, according to the book of Revelation. This just means that death will be gone forever, not that death will be suffering in hell forever.

So while there are a few passages that require a bit more effort to handle properly, easily the clearest passages in Scripture – and there are many of them – depict the fate of God's enemies as final death and destruction. They will be gone forever, and the only way out is to find eternal life in Christ Jesus.

You are a part of the Rethinking Hell team and have been a guest and host for the podcast. What is the mission of Rethinking Hell?

Rethinking Hell is a collaboration of Evangelical Christians from different backgrounds who have all reached the conclusion that the majority view among Evangelicals is just not biblical. So we started this initiative to get that message out there in a clearly Evangelical Christian context. In some parts of the church – presumably parts of the church where people aren't encouraged to understand much about the wider body of Christ – there are folks who automatically associate our view with heretical groups like the Christadelphians or the Jehovah's Witnesses, both of which reject the

doctrine of the Trinity. There's some historical quibbling to be done there (for example, Charles Russell who founded the Jehovah's Witnesses appears to have been influenced by more orthodox Christians who were conditionalists before founding his new movement). But the main point is that we want people to realise that actually this is something that you can – and should – believe as an Evangelical, orthodox Christian. Through the blog and podcast we're providing resources on this subject in an Evangelical context in an effort to reach out primarily to an Evangelical audience. Apart from providing biblical reasons to rethink hell, which is our main interest, we also look at historical and contemporary debates about this subject, and through the podcast we interview a range of guests. One of the great things about the podcast, I think, is that it exposes listeners to the reality that actually across the wider church there are some top notch Christian thinkers who have changed their mind about hell. That's a good way of challenging the mistaken perception that serious Evangelicals will inevitably conclude that the traditional view is correct. Far from it!

You also blog and host a podcast at <http://www.rightreason.org/>. What other topics besides Hell do you discuss and think are important to the Church today?

A lot! Some of it is about really trying to push Christians to think more and where necessary to challenge some of the beliefs they take for granted. Hell is one of those areas, and so is my view on human nature. Quite some time ago I became convinced that the biblical view of human beings was a holistic one, where we aren't immaterial souls that live in physical bodies. Actually we're flesh and blood, physical beings who will die and we depend on the resurrection of the body to live again after death. I also have plenty to say about what usually gets called "apologetics," thinking about the evidence for what we believe and responding to the intellectual challenges that people make to the Christian faith. I don't really think of it as apologetics, I just think of it as discussing Scripture, faith and reason and so on. I look at all sorts of issues here, including some discussions about the historical Jesus, for example, but the relationship between God and morality is one that I'm particularly interested in.

I'm also pretty passionate about the way that Christians engage the world around them, socially and politically. Actually my PhD dissertation was about the role of religious convictions in public and political life. I think it's something we need to do better, in a way that's culturally literate, intellectually credible and faithful. Sometimes Christian focus entirely on the last of these and the result is that we rob ourselves of a voice because we come across as simply out of touch and cranky. We need to think and act carefully here because there's a lot at stake, and to be honest it's an area where I'd like to do more work, but as all of this is a side project (I work a regular day job), time is something I just don't have enough of to do the sort of work that I'd like to.

Good Dr., you have some killer chops! You do the theme music for Rethinking Hell and several other podcasts. You also operate <http://www.thememusic.co.nz>. Can you fill us in on your musical background, influences and endeavors?

Music was my first love, and may still be. I loved music at school and started playing the guitar as soon as my parents would get me an electric one. After I finished school, before I studied theology or philosophy I studied music, and I was in a band for a while. I've played in church as well off and on over the years. So music has been with me for quite some time.

My musical endeavors were revived because of my podcast, *Say Hello to my Little Friend*, which started back in 2008 (my blog started in 2006). I wanted theme music, so I recorded it myself. It had been years since I had recorded anything and I really loved it, so I just kept doing it. I change the theme music ever now and then, and I've done music for other podcasts like Rethinking Hell. Shortly after I started recording podcast theme music I launched Theme Music New Zealand to showcase the sort of thing I do, and since launching that site I've made music for a few short movies in competitions, some of which is at my SoundCloud page (<http://soundcloud.com/glenn-peoples>). I certainly haven't made any money from it though.

I generally find that musicians like a whole range of different styles of music and I'm no exception, especially when it comes to making music. I generally don't like the kind of pop music you're likely to hear on a lot of radio stations and I'm not much of a fan of rap music. I'm probably not a big fan of some kinds of country either (but only some kinds, I do really like Johnny Cash). Since I'm not in a band and I just make music for random projects I try to capture a different feels for each piece I'm making. I make classical music, funk, Sherlock Holmes-esque sounding things as well as the heavier stuff. But when it comes to most of what I listen to for pleasure, I definitely prefer the louder stuff, from hard rock through to ridiculously heavy metal, which explains the podcast theme music I use. As far as influences go, that's pretty broad as I try to cover a range of styles – even among the heavier music I make. So it will range from classic metal like Iron Maiden or Judas Priest to grunge like early Soundgarden to Metalcore like Killswitch Engage to thrash metal like Slayer or something with a bit of flair Tourniquet (one of my all-time favorite bands), right through to European black metal like Slechtvalk and orchestral metal like Nightwish or Within Temptation. One thing I really like to do is take older hymns and reboot them as metal instrumentals, and I've used a few of those in my podcast. But for the more classical styled pieces I record I really couldn't say what influences me. Probably theme music from movies that I've seen because it was written to be really evocative and to draw you in to what's happening, which is what I try to do when I'm writing music for the screen.

Would we have been burnt at the stake for having this conversation about Hell 500 years ago?

No, you'd be surprised actually! I know that some writers seem to think that their view is the one that virtually all real Christians have always held, and any other view is heresy, but those with a bit more knowledge of history realize that actually it's not that simple. We know that some of the Church Fathers held to conditional immortality (e.g. a couple of the Apostolic Fathers, Irenaeus, Arnobius and perhaps even Athanasius). The view that is now called the traditional view (namely, eternal torment) was really given a boost by the influence of Augustine and did become the dominant view, but nobody can justify saying that it was ever the only serious Christian view. Conditional Immortality is certainly compatible with the earlier Creeds like the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed. A few people have claimed that that conditional immortality was condemned at the second Council of Constantinople (AD 553), but that's a mistake, it's just not true: the council actually condemned universalism. I'm not personally aware of anyone even being excommunicated, let alone executed (!) in centuries gone by for thinking that the Bible teaches conditional immortality. Almost ironically, that sort of thing (the excommunication – not the execution!) is most likely to happen in a very modern Evangelical context, a context where at times people are painfully unfamiliar with the history of the faith we share as followers of Christ.

It's funny in a sad sort of way that a number of Evangelical Protestant Christians have this view of Church history where they think that once upon a time they would have been persecuted as heretics and now we're free of all that dogmatism – while at the same time they have such detailed statements of faith of their own that they end up making heretics of everybody else in the church, especially when it comes to what we think about hell. Fortunately that's changing, and if God sees fit to use me to do just a small part of that work, then I'm grateful. The point isn't just to reject traditional beliefs so that we can be hip and edgy, and of course there's a risk that people will latch on to what I'm doing for that reason. I don't want to promote that. The point of being a Reformer isn't just to abandon traditional beliefs and come up with something new. Reform is about calling people saying "maybe we've made some wrong turns and we need to take a few steps back here." It's about calling people back to their roots, and for me (I certainly identify as an Evangelical), those roots are in Scripture, and also in the church, the body of followers centered around Jesus. Ultimately it's not the end of the world if others in the church don't share my conclusions. I'll keep trying, but it's not the end of the world. The point is that I really think we all have to be willing to go back to the source and be willing to find out that we're wrong.

[BRAM_COOLS]

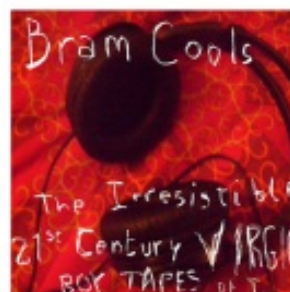
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Steve Ruff

Best of lists are hard...12 months of music means many great releases can be buried under a gazillion other releases and forgotten when the list is compiled...well, what's a boy to do? Here is my "best of" list with the top 5 listed first and in no particular order because I just can't do that. Support the music you love, that means, BUY IT!

(top 5) **Lifesavers – Heaven High** – Michael Knott, Josh Lory, Rick McDonough, Nick White and Masaki Liu return with a cohesive album of some of the best written Lifesavers songs ever recorded.

(top 5) **Bill Mallonee – Dolorosa** – Hauntingly beautiful, pensive and poetic, Mallonee's best solo album to date.

(top 5) **Chris Taylor – Traveler's Hotel** – Taylor blows my mind with this release that is deep, musically brilliant and lyrically poignant.

(top 5) **Seventh Circle – The Struggle 2013 Re-mastered Deluxe Edition** – Adam Pederson re-masters a stellar release that exudes with well-crafted songs and echoes with brooding delivery.

(top 5) **Unteachers – A Human Comedy** – An amazing album from members of Tantrum of the Muse, should be out soon...hopefully.

Corrections House – Mike IX Williams of Eyehategod and Scott Kelly of Neurosis deliver a blistering assault on the senses.

Bill Mallonee – Future Hymns of the New Idolatry – Hymns that I can relate too, worshipful and honest...also, best name for an album all year!

Watain – The Wild Hunt – Black Metal has been redefined and turned on its ear, brutal and unique.

Daniel Amos – Dig Here Said the Angel – Daniel Amos return with their best album from a long and incredible career.

Bill Mallonee Band/The NPR Sessions – Collection of demos, live songs and general brilliance.

Eminem – Marshall Mathers LP 2 – Say what you want, but the wordsmith returns with an album heavy on emotion and ear bending wordplay.

Skinny Puppy – Weapon – The masters return with an album that bridges the gap between their early releases and the newer direction of hanDover.

Nick Cave – Push the Sky Away – It's Nick Cave!

Daniel Bashta – The Invisible – The only "praise and worship" album from 2013 that I find moving and outside the industry standard.

Bill Mallonee & Muriah Rose – Town Hall – Excellent live recording with Bill and the unparalleled vocals of Muriah Rose.

Crime and the City Solution – American Twilight – Members of Wovenhand, Einsturzende Neubauten and former Bad Seeds drop a stunning return to form.

Skylar Grey – Don't Look Down – The beauty in her voice is unmatched in the pop world.

Motorhead – Aftershock – It's Lemmy, nuff said!

Bad Religion – True North – The punk masters return with what we expect from them, complete brilliance.

Rob Zombie – Venomous Rat Regeneration Vendor – The horror show returns with the best album of his post White Zombie career, better than Hellbilly Deluxe and a milestone for his music career...definitely merges the best parts of White Zombie with that deep bass groove and the perfect band of Piggy, John 5's guitar wizardry and Ginger Fish's manic drumming.

Josh Lory

2013 the year I relived the 80's and 90's musically! Most all my favorites from those years put out new material and all for the better. Tons of great EP's from the Pixies, Chuck Ragan, Brian Jonestwon Massacre, etc, but for this list I went with the full length albums I enjoyed most.

1. **Five Iron Frenzy – Engine Of A Million Plots** – Instant favorite as soon as I heard it. It hit me like that Forgetters album did last year. Very relatable lyrics for me intertwined with themes of winter and mortality. Continues the darker musical vibe of the last two FIF albums. This is my favorite they have done yet. Amazing people, amazing band!

2. **Neko Case – The Worst Things Get, The Harder I Fight, The Harder I Fight, The More I Love You** – Her voice melts me, Case is the siren that would lure me to death if I were lost at sea. Deep, beautiful, melodies, and some of her most rockin' material to date!

3. **Daniel Amos – Dig Here Said The Angel** – It's Terry Taylor. It's Daniel Amos. It's timeless. One of a kind.

4. **Black Rebel Motorcycle Club – Specter At The Feast** – Most consistent band out there. Dark, bluesy, moody, gripping! Awesome cover of The Call's 'Let The Day Begin', Robert Been pays tribute to his dad!

5. **Streetlight Manifetso – The Hands That Thieve** – Just got into this band this year and holy crap are they outstanding! Took the whole Ska/Punk genre to a new level of songwriting. Every time I listen to this album I am blown away at the structure of the tunes and the lyrics as well.

6. **Bill Mallonee and the High Desert Freaks – Dolorosa** – Another huge year of Mallonee releases and really every thing he put out this year should be on this list, but I chose this one because it was a big step for Bill recording his own material. He got some new gear and put it to good use and they'll only sound better from here on. He's the best out there. This one and WPA vol. 18 are a tie for the most part.

7. **CJ Ramone – Reconquista** – The best post Ramones release from any of the members in my opinion, every song is good, CJ is an all around bad-ass! If you like the classic Ramones vibe, get this!

8. **Billy Bragg – Tooth and Nail** – Nice chill Americana album from Bragg, he's the English Woody Guthrie. Old gospel inspired lyrics. This is one of his best releases to date, highly recommended.)

9. **Joan Jett and the Black Hearts – Unvarnished** – It's 1982 all over again, they really tapped into the old Blackhearts sound from the first 4 albums, production and all. She's the queen of rock!

10. **Elephant Stone – S/T** – Excellent blend of Shoegaze and Psychedelic rock, Matt Crosslin turned me on to this band and I bought everything I could find. This band is one to watch for, get into them while they're still underground!

11. **Frank Turner – Tape Deck Heart** – Folk/Punk at it's finest. Like Billy Bragg with a little more fire in his belly. Can't go wrong with any of his releases, though I'm sure some of his lyrics will be unsettling for many believers out there.

12. **Mick Leonardi – Don't Push The River** – I've known Mick for nearly 20 years now (crazy!). My old band Bluejacket used to gig a lot with his old band Divit, same county, same scene (side note Nick White played drums in Divit). This is Mick's second solo outing and it's his best material to date. Great Americana/Folk/Rock album. Heart filled lyrics and a great voice.

13. **Justin McRoberts – K** – the last instalment of the ongoing CMYK project Justin started a few years back. Lyrics were inspired by letters sent to Justin by his fans. Justin is the best singer I've ever heard live, his voice can fill a large room and really draw you in. Half the albums songs are revised versions of songs from the C, M, and Y ep's. A book was written to accompany the albums, I have yet to get the book, but look forward to it.

Hands down my favorite release from McRoberts!

14. **The Joy Formidable – Wolf’s Law** – 2nd full length from this English trio. Mix of Shoegaze and 90’s Modern Rock. Don’t listen to this band a lot, but when I do they always impress!

15. **My Bloody Valentine – MBV** – The greatest Shoegazers ever return after a very long break and show how timeless their sound is. This one has topped many best of 2013 lists.

16. **Bad Religion – True North** – It’s a Bad Religion album, nuff said.

17. **Alkaline Trio – My Shame Is True** – Best AK3 album since From Here To Infirmary.

18. **Michale Graves – Vagabond** – Former Misfits frontman made a real nice album here. Not the Horror Punk sound he’s known for, here you get a solid Modern Rock album. Shades of U2, Echo and The Bunynymen, and Blind Melon.

19. **dUg Pinnick – Naked** – Some of my favorite lyrics of the year on this album. Very heavy Doom/Stoner metal. C’mon it’s dUg Pinnick, the coolest rock star ever!

20. **Lifesavers – Heaven High** – I would have had this higher on the list if I wasn’t involved, still pretty egotistical for me to have this on here. I love this album and couldn’t be happier with how it turned out!

Also at 20. **The Sweet Sorrows ‘It All Belongs’** – Great release by the Electrics frontman and wife!

Matt Crosslin

Top lists are kind of tough – I can pick 20 or so of my favorites, but ranking them past that is just too hard. This was also a busy year for music – Chris Taylor, Skinny Puppy, Motorhead, Bad Religion, Joan Jett, MBV, and dUg Pinnick are not on my list simply because I still haven’t had a chance to listen to any of them yet! So here is my list in alphabetical order again :)

Aradhna – Live in Concert – Beautiful Indian/rock fusion music that has to be experienced live for full effect. This live recording comes close.

Black Rebel Motorcycle Club – Specter At The Feast – Almost worth it for The Call cover alone, but the rest of the tracks prove that this band still has what it takes.

Champion Leader – 1987 – Jamie Bozeman of Luxury snuck this one in before Luxury hit the studio, and it is quite a good one. 80s throwback in a lot of ways, but very modern in others.

Cush – SP3 – I think this one was released in some way in 2013? Their best since *The New Sound*. Can’t wait for the rumored vinyl.

Daniel Amos – Dig Here Said the Angel – There is probably a reason that we all chose this one. Daniel Amos proves they still have what it takes to produce one of the best albums of the year.

Deliverance – Hear What I Say! – I don’t see how any fan of the Big D could not love this. It mixes all of the various Deliverance sounds into a clear, cohesive, blistering thrash fest.

Dime Store Zombies – Dime Store Zombies – If I were ranking, this album would be a serious contender for the top spot. These zombies prove they will be a force to reckon with in the future.

Easter Teeth – Being Alone With Your Thoughts Is For Inmates – a late surprise, this is one of the most original recordings I have heard this year. Not to mention it is music that only has a rhythm section? Killer.

Elephant Stone – Elephant Stone – Trippy psychedelic guitar rock from a sitar-turned-bass player? Oh, yeah. Love the Indian flourishes in several songs.

Deni Gauthier – i (am) hope – Singer/songwriters are still a dime a dozen, but the title track alone is worth the inclusion on this list. Oh, and did you know he is a killer painter, too?

Lifesavers – Heaven High – Another serious contender for top spot, don’t let Josh’s humility fool you. This is one of the best albums of the year by any band.

Nina Llopis – Unveiled (part-1) – I know this is a bit older and just a short ep, but there is something about this ep that is just hard to describe. But probably the best project Nina has been involved in, and that says a lot looking at her past projects.

Bill Mallonee – Future Hymns of the New Idolatry – Mr. Mallonee put out several stellar albums this year, but this one nabs the top of his output for me. Maybe its the rebellious title, but something about these songs really grab me.

Megadeth – Supercollider – I know this isn’t their best, but it is still miles better than most other metal albums out there. Still loud, intense, and in your face. Megadeth keeps rolling over the metal posers out there.

The Ocean Blue – Ultramarine – Another strong contender for nest album of the year, dreamy new-waveish guitar 80’s retro coolness that is probably one of the best albums they have ever recorded.

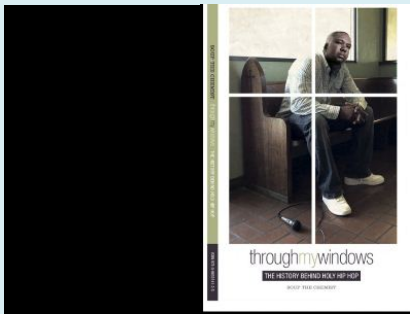
Pacifico – Without Heroes – This is really catchy stuff that should be all over the radios. Guitar rock for those that like well crafted songs.

Secret Archives of the Vatican – Storms – Electronic world dance music? I love this kind of stuff when it is well done, and Secret Archives really knows how to do it right. They will probably have three more releases out by the time we publish the next issue :)

Stryper – No More Hell To Pay – Say what you will about the yellow and black attack, they still get serious respect among metalheads for good reason. This is one of their most mature and catchy yet. It was hard to pick this one for the list over *The Covering*, but they have been on a roll recently.

Veil of Ashes – Eternal Teenage Angst – I know this is a collection of older tracks, but there is one new track and a few never-release, all of which are incredible. This needs a vinyl release if there was any justice in the world.

DTL Collective – I know this is cheating, and maybe I am biased, but the guys in the collective (ahem – we need to get some diversity in there guys, okay?) are churning out some great tunes this year. Hard to pick just one, so I cheated and put them all here. Mike Indest, Eddie Parrino, And How, Human 2.7, and others have put out new tunes this year, as well as several who have re-released older tunes.



Soup The Chemist – Through My Window
2013 Dimlights

I listen to many types of music, I'm a self-proclaimed music snob, but of all the styles I listen to I take Rap the most serious. Hip Hop culture is near and dear to my heart, in fact I am Hip Hop! I was exposed to the culture in 1984 when my uncle gave my brother and I a tape that had songs like 'The Message' and 'White Lines' by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, 'Planet Rock' by Afrikan Bambaataa, and 'Jam On It' by Newcleus. I heard Punk Rock for the first time that year as well (I was 8 years old); both of the styles of music forever changed me as a quest for knowledge of these young cultural movements began. I was also listening to Steve Taylor and Stryper at that time. Through the years my music collection grew, my knowledge of music and the world grew, my eyes began to open. Fast forward to 1992 on the new release shelf of my local Christian bookstore when my eye was caught by a fish eye lens picture of a rap group SFC – the album was Phase III. I had heard of SFC from magazines but could never find the tapes. My local CCM stores were the ones who decided what we got but wouldn't even special order stuff for us. So I was stoked to finally hear the group. That album has since remained a staple in my Rap collection. It was the first time I heard real Hip Hop in the Christian industry. I was also lucky enough to see SFC on the Phase III tour in Concord, Ca at the Screem. Soup The Chemist aka Super C from SFC is one of my all-time favorite Emcees. He covers a huge range of flows, every album is different, and a total lyrical genius! Soup wrote a book about the history of Holy Hip Hop and I couldn't wait to read it. I read it in one day, couldn't put it down. Biographical, motivational, biblical, spiritual, and conspiracy minded. Soup hides nothing about himself and the industry. Even if you're not a fan of Rap I recommend this book! SFC were pioneers. They paved the way, but sadly like many artists we cover in this zine, they were taken advantage of, lied to, and swept under the rug by those professing to live in Christ. Great tales from the road are included, like a witch following the group on tour, as well as a small history of groups like P.I.D. and Freedom Of Soul. Soup also talks a bit about his relationship with DTL favorite, the late great Gene Eugene. Some very personal things from his life are shared throughout. This stands up there with Mark Solomon's book, both have great insight to the early days of the

underground movements in the Christian biz. Get this!!!!

– Josh Lory



Bride – Skin For Skin +2
(Collector's Edition)
2013 Retroactive Records

This is one of my favorite Bride releases. Original release came out in 2007, this album got me back into the band and led me to look into all the albums I had missed. I've said it before, Bride may be the greatest hard rock band ever, huge catalog, every album has it's own unique vibe, what brings them all together is that underlying Southern Rock feel in the delivery. I think if you are a fan of the earlier Bride albums like Show No Mercy and Live To Die you'll really like this one. Easily their heaviest album, crunchy guitar, growling vocals, a lot of double kick. J Powell's remaster really brings out the bass guitar and kick drum, something I didn't realize was lacking in the old master, until I heard the new one, "Take The Medication" is a prime example of this. "Bang Goodbye", "End Of Days", "The Government", are a few of the stand outs, this album flows well beginning to end. Great riffs, good lyrics, strong vocals, this band should have been and should be huge, they've got the catalog to back it. A couple of remastered demos are on there as bonus cuts, but to me don't really fit in with the rest of the album. Here's to hoping Retroactive gets to rerelease and remaster the rest of the Bride releases!

– Josh Lory



Stryper – No More Hell To Pay
2013 Frontiers Records

By now you have probably heard the hype about the new Stryper album. Maybe you are even sick of it. But don't be fooled by the hipster snobs – this album deserves the hype it is gaining. This is a darker, heavier, more mature Stryper than we heard back in the late 80s MTV heydays. The interesting thing is that

they managed to go heavier without losing what made them Stryper in the first place. As much as I like *Against The Law*, it always seemed like they lost a bit of how they were to make that album. That was probably on purpose. I know that some fans are not happy with this album, and I get that the songs overall are a bit slower than some in the past. Of course, you do have "Water Into Wine" – an air guitar jam song if I ever heard one. The cover of "Jesus is Just Alright" does stick out a bit stylistically, but I still enjoy it. "No More Hell To Pay" is almost melancholy (in a good way), but still finds the band saying they will "rock for the Rock" in a more worn-but-still-hanging-in-there kind of way. Stryper has been on a roll for the last few albums – I hope they keep that going with future releases.

– Matt Crosslin



Fluxional – Not Yet
2013 Independent

Fluxional is a new project from Curtis Proffit created for fans of "80's and/or 90's guitar rock music with a God given message." Vocals are mostly handled by Chris Gildersleeve, who was at one time a member of Four Living Creatures and Elder. There is a distinct FLC/Elder influence on the sound, but overall I would say the 90s guitar rock description is fairly accurate. Lyrics are very clearly Christian, so it's almost like you are getting a direct kick-back to the underground 80s/90s heavy alternative Christian music scene. I hope that this album is just a start of a project that keeps going – this type of music is rare to find these days.

– Matt Crosslin



Deliverance – Hear What I Say!
2013 3 Frogz Records

I am just not sure how any fan of Deliverance could not just love this album. Sure, they do try to represent all of their various stylistic changes on one album, but if Metallica had

put out an album this good in the past few years, metal heads everywhere would be drooling over it. The only real problem is that this full-length is a bit short on original material. You really get six new songs, two covers, a short instrumental intro, and a German language version of a previous song. Stylistically, the tracks tend to move through the progression of the band's sound in chronological order, starting with a few blistering thrash/speed tracks, they transitioning to the moody, groovy stuff, then the artistic side, then back to heavy and even a nod to side bands Fearful Symmetry and Jupiter VI. What you always hear on every track is the passion and musicianship of each person involved. This is not a half-baked reunion just for the heck of it – this is truly going out on a high note. Really cool album cover in my opinion, too. Like many fans, I am wishing this album was a sign of more to come. But as it is, it serves as a fitting last number from one of the great heavy bands of our time.

– Matt Crosslin



Bill Mallonee and The High Desert Freaks – Dolorosa
2013 Independent

Unfortunately a very busy 2013 has kept me from what I enjoy most, writing reviews and doing that good ole Down the Line Zine. Getting back into the swing of things, fresh year, a new start and reviews that I need to catch up on. Seems right that the first one I get to is Bill Mallonee and The High Desert Freaks release Dolorosa. This is a distinctive and beautiful album that I think is by far Mallonee's best release in his solo career. There's a certain feel that I expect when getting Bill's music; there's an ambience in the haunting lyrics and an emotion that is unmistakably human at the core; there's the honesty in outlook, the gentle ringing backdrop of things unseen, and a perspective that comes from years of travel and experience. Bill is gifted in ways that I don't see from many musicians on the scene these days. He's the blue collar hero in the vein of Woody Guthrie, he's the poet that outshines Dylan on most days, and he picks, strums and plays those strings that echo the dust and smell of the open highway as he lays all his best hopes, fears and hopelessness out for all to see. There's a connection to this music, a camaraderie for the weary traveler's on life's highway, an unmistakable beauty that the listener finds and can relate to in a way that

most musicians cannot express with this type of sincerity and honesty. This album is an amazing 12 tracks plus 4 additional bonus tracks. It takes the listener on the journey, a journey that we all encounter in various ways, that journey of life and circumstance. A full band release here with point on mixing and mastering, this is a MUST have for fans of folk/Americana, for those who need the reminder of better things in spite of the present trials, for those who feel burnt out but clutch the feeling of better days coming with a steel grip. This album is the best Bill has released, and although it will be hard to top, I know he will... he always does! As a last note... yes, you can stream this on Bandcamp and listen, do Bill a favor and thank him by purchasing this album (and his 56 other albums!) and expressing your gratitude with action and not just words. You can now also purchase albums as gifts for others through bandcamp...support independent music!

– Steve Ruff



Jagged Doctrine – Electrocutted
2014 Independent

Way back before Spotify or Bandcamp, before Facebook, before even MySpace, there was Mp3.com. It wasn't very social, but it was the place to check out this new-fangled digital method of music distribution. It was also pretty much a free-for-all place where unknown bands could fight alongside established bands due to lack of industry interest ("this mp3 thing will never catch on!"). Out of this melee, a band by the name of Jagged Doctrine rose to the top of and dominated the industrial charts for years alongside many other well-known names. Fast forward 15 years and Jagged Doctrine is still on top of the new musical landscape, just moving on to better and more social websites. The core musical identity of Jagged Doctrine has mostly been about electronic metal music, sometimes focusing a bit more on one side or the other. Electrocutted finds the band leaning just ever so slightly to the electronic side. A few songs, like "Wrestling With An Angel" and "Not Your Enemy" are all electronic, but metal fans need not fear. The guitars are still present and upfront throughout the album. As a band that has been in the digital world for quite some time, Jagged Doctrine takes a hard look at the "screens that separate" in their lyrics. It's not always a pretty picture. My favorite song so far is "Lost Battlescar" with its nice interplay of electronic and electric (guitar). There is also a nice tribal beat on "The Invisible Man" as

well as a remix of "Don't Waste Your Time" from The Stalker album by Human 2.7 that closes the album. Jagged Doctrine shows they still have what drove them to the top of the charts back in the day.

– Matt Crosslin



Wales Road – Radio Scripture
2013 Independent

Wales Road returns with an album of updated classic hymns. But don't think they have wimped out at all – the style here is still the Wales Road signature blend of hard rock, blues, and new wave influences. Since I didn't grow up in church, it wasn't that hard for me to separate most of these songs from the original versions, but your mileage may vary depending on attachments to older arrangements. For instance, I didn't quite connect with the acoustic/Americana rendition of "Amazing Grace", but really liked "Christ The Solid Rock" – probably based on more on personal attachment (or lack thereof) to the songs. The first "half" of the album is mostly electrified, while the second "half" is mostly acoustic. There is also a cool radio interview tacked on the end. For fans of re-imagined classic hymns projects, or of the Wales Road mix of sounds, this album is a great new addition to your collection.

– Matt Crosslin



Archaeologist – Vol. I EP
2013 Independent

I'm coming up a bit short on how to describe the music of Archaeologist. In this case, that is a good thing. It's a heavy, modern, metal, alternative, progressive amalgamation of styles that works quite well. But don't let the "modern" tag scare you off if you like more traditional forms of heavy music – its mixed nicely in there with plenty of other traditional metal forms. Even more interesting is that Archaeologist is a one man project, with Kyle Schaefer performing the instruments and vocals. Maybe this is what gives the EP its consistent feel, even as it cycles through so many different styles and genres. Even the

vocals go through a range of styles, from clean and alternative to deathly growls. This EP is the first in a series of planned EPs. Oh, and there is also an instrumental version of it. Archaeologist is an interesting and original project that I recommend you keep your eye on.

– Matt Crosslin



**The Way – I Keep Falling
2013 Thumper Punk**

The Thumper Punk Juggernaut Punk Machine keeps rolling, this time with a new album from The Way. The Way is a mostly classic punk rock band, with a few touches of pop punk and acoustic punk here and there. The slower/acoustic numbers make a nice break from the blistering punk attack of the other songs. But the punk has got to rock to make a good punk rock album, and in the case of The Way, it does. The only thing that doesn't work for me is the closing cover of the worship standard "Greater Grace." Maybe I just wasn't a huge fan of the original (the melody, not the lyrics), but it seems a bit out of place as an electrified but slowly plodding album closer. Other than that, I would highly recommend this album for fans of punk – the passion, energy, and punk ethos that you have come to expect from Thumper Punk are all present on this album.

– Matt Crosslin



**False Idle – Threat
2013 Thumper Punk**

In the large and still growing re-emergent underground Christian punk scene, False Idle seems to quickly be climbing to the top of the heap. Out of all the good to really good punk albums I listened to 2013, this is probably one of the best. False Idle is not redefining punk as much as doing it very well. The passion in the vocals and playing is very evident in this recording, which is probably what catches my attention the most. I hate punk that just seems to be going through the motions. A few touches of reggae and pop punk here and

there as well as some near thrash-crossover choices add some diversity to the album. The acoustic based title song also shows off the acoustic punk side of the band and probably serves as my favorite track. Twelve mostly short tracks makes for one quick full length, but the good news is that there are no real throw away tracks – just an album that starts, rocks your face off, and then takes off before it wears out its welcome.

– Matt Crosslin



**Jason Tyler Burton – Something Borrowed
2014 Independent**

You may not be familiar with Jason Tyler Burton, but go check out his NoiseTrade site to see who is. Yep, Mr. Bill Mallonee himself would encourage you to check out his music, because he says "You will NOT be disappointed." This particular album is a collection of covers and originals that you can download through NoiseTrade. Acoustic, Folk, Americana, Singer/Songwriter are all good labels to use here. This particular recording is a bit more raw and unpolished on purpose, but that really just adds an atmosphere that works. You can also check on Burton's other music on his BandCamp site. A new full-length of originals called Headwaters is said to be in the works as I type, so be on the look-out for that.

– Matt Crosslin



**The Sweet Sorrows – It All Belong
2013 Independent**

Stellar release by Sammy and Kylie Horner. 10 songs of gritty as well as tender Americana/Celt/Blue Grass/Outlaw Country, some of the best you'll hear indie or major. The opening track 'Ain't No Devil Ever Gonna Come Steal My Soul' will set the pace and get you hooked to hear the rest of the album. 'The Baby Song' has a nice Johnny and June Carter Cash feel. Beautiful harmony vocals cover the deep warm compositions, Kylie's soft voice is the perfect balance for Sammy's dark smokey delivery. This album flows well

start to finish, each track compliments the next. Aside from the two I already mentioned, my stand out tracks are 'Nothing New', 'If I Knew How To Tell You', and the closer 'May The Road Rise Up To Meet You'. Look forward to more material from this duo. Can't recommend this album enough! Be sure to check out all of Sammy's stuff at his Bandcamp site.

– Josh Lory



**Grace & Thieves – Shepherd of the Wolves
2013 Veritas Vinyl**

This slightly over-looked ep should have gotten more attention just due to the high caliber guest players on the album. But these guests don't really overshadow the whole Grace & Thieves sound as much as augment it, though. The first track has a long, slow build up before it thrashes away nicely. You then get two tracks of intense, fast, in-your-face thrash. The last track is a bit of a surprise with a piano intro that builds into a slow doom-ish track, but the thrash intensity and speed builds until the riff finally comes in near the end. Overall, a good ep that serves as a preview of what is to come.

– Matt Crosslin

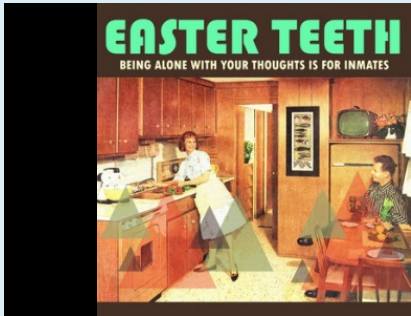


**Glenn Rowlands – Ancient Eagle
2013 Independent**

Acoustic, stripped down, and rawer than we have heard Rowlands in the past, these songs are labeled as demos. So will we see these again on future albums? Maybe so, but for the most part these songs can stand alone as another project of the acoustic side of Rowlands that we have heard on many albums in the past. Some of these demos are newer versions of older songs, or even interesting takes on older songs like "I Thought I Could" (one of Rowlands albums in the 1990's was I Think I Can if you don't get the reference). This is mostly laid back, contemplative acoustic music with minimalist but effective percussion. You also get a recording of Glenn giving his Testimony near

the end. These might be demos but I found them to be quite enjoyable as with all of Rowlands music.

– Matt Crosslin



Easter Teeth – Being Alone With Your Thoughts Is For Inmates
2013 Veritas Vinyl

This album was a huge surprise for me. When I put the songs into iTunes, the style came up as “Soul & Hardcore.” Great, I thought – yet another silly kid somewhere messing with genre descriptions. But, weird as it sounds, that is about the best description I can think of. Easter Teeth is basically the rhythm section of a math rock band that decided to form a new band with just those two instruments, writing aggressive hardcore songs mixed with soul/funk that is centered on drums and bass guitar... and then throw some horns on the top for the heck of it. You have to hear it to believe it. The bass is so distorted and fuzzy that it really makes a good basis for the songs. The drumming is insane like you would expect from a math rock alumnus. The horns really add icing on the whole package – apparently there are versions of the songs without the horns because the horn players can’t always play live with them. Experimental out-of-the-box music that actually rocks. If you are itching for something different, at least give these guys a listen at Bandcamp to see if they can catch that itch.

– Matt Crosslin



Transistor Revival – Transistor Revival
2013 Independent

Transistor Revival is a newer project from Glenn Rowlands and Robert Powell. The tone, lyrics and music are much darker than most of their past projects. Loud guitars, catchy hooks, and memorable melodies are still present. The name of the album/project seems to be rooted in a series of dramas of the same name. It would be interesting to see what kind of drama would go along with this

kind of music. With song titles like “Blood Stained Hands,” “Cyclotron Curse,” and “Hordes Of Hellish Flies” – you know that those had to be some interesting dramas. As a long term fan of Rowlands music, I can tell that he has been practicing and pushing himself to get better with each release. Not that he wasn’t good in the past, but you can tell he is growing as an artist. The heaviness continues through ten songs until the album closer “Jesus” – a worship song that sounds like it was recorded spontaneously live. Overall, another strong effort from the musical team of Rowlands and Powell.

– Matt Crosslin



Fashion Week – Darker Things
2013 Independent

Fashion Week is a bit different than I was expecting. Their first track, “Jacksons Everywhere”, sounds almost like they are starting off with a slightly amplified Americana sound. But the second track (“The Other Side/SPIT BUBBLES”) is alternative guitar rock. Most of the songs on the their EP seem to float somewhere in between the two, a bit eclectic and a bit electric – with a helping of self-deprecating humor (they have a song called “The Joke is On Me” after all). You can check out their ep for free on Bandcamp if you like. And I am reviewing it here because I think some readers will dig it.

– Matt Crosslin



The Glance – Virtue, Vice, Grace & Sin
2013 Independent

So what exactly does progressive folk rock sound like? If it is all like The Glance, call me a fan. I was hooked from the melancholic interplay between the guitar and mandolin on “Keep Your Mood From Changing.” I am guessing the “progressive” part is the electric guitar that is tastefully added in many places. Or are those horns I hear on “Spies!”? Almost gives the song a slight Havalina Rail Company vibe. Songs like “It Just Keeps Happening” also display a very talented rhythm section

beneath the other sounds. Overall, the most impressive part are the ways the different instruments are interwoven together rather than relegated to background noise for the vocals. Of course, the lyrics seem to be about as intricate as the music, so this band is really the whole package for people that like intelligent music.

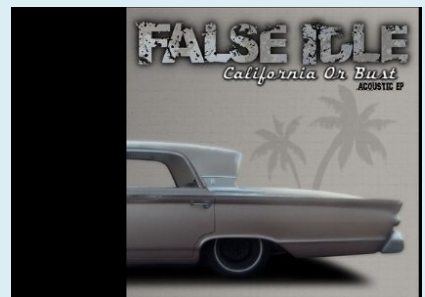
– Matt Crosslin



Kings & Daughters – The Lion
2013 On The Attack Records

Hardcore that comes out of the gate screaming back at you. Kings & Daughters definitely brings the intensity with their debut ep. I’m not totally up to date on current hardcore trends, but what I do hear in this is what I first liked back in the mid-90s when Focused and Six Feet Deep first hit the scene: energy, intensity, conviction, and focused rawness. Every song on this ep as an interesting song title that contains a character followed by a colon and a sub-title (like “The Sphinx: A Graven Image”). If you like your music intense and in-your-face, this might just be for you. The Lion will be released as a free digital ep or a limited edition CD for purchase.

– Matt Crosslin



False Idle – California Or Bust EP
2013 Thumper Punk

False Idle seems to be emerging as one of the leaders of the new Christian Punk rock scene. But to prove that they are more than just a bunch of loud punks, they decided to release an acoustic EP. California Or Bust is basically a collection of re-recorded versions of earlier False Idle songs. Punk detractors would do well to listen to these songs to see that there is more to punk than just making noise. The songs on this ep are much more enjoyable in this format than you would think. I would recommend at least checking this out online even if you aren’t a huge punk fan, because these songs are pretty catchy.

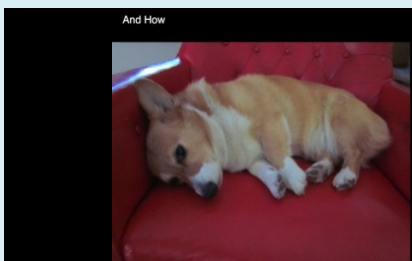
– Matt Crosslin



Bride – Incorruptible
2013 Retroactive Records

Well, here we thought ‘Tsar Bomba’ was the final Bride album and we thought wrong. The Thompson brothers are back picking up right where they left off, ‘Incorruptible’ is in the vein of Bride’s more artsy/progressive (if you will) albums like ‘Drop’, ‘Oddities’, and ‘Tsar Bomba’. Amazing riffs from Troy as always, moments of dark sludge, prog, 90’s grunge, and all types of metal are heard throughout. I got a download of the album and have no idea who the other players are or production crew so can’t give credit where credit is due. Having said that, the drumming is excellent and the bass is in the pocket and bringing some good low end. Production is raw and open, but also delves into using the studio as an instrument with the mix. This album has some of the best ballads I have ever heard from Bride and Dale’s voice really shines on those tunes. Good tender moments with tinges of ‘Horrendous Disc’ era Daniel Amos can be heard on the record. Lyrics are thoughtful and poetic. Nice piano and acoustic pieces float about the heavy onslaught of guitars. A lot of mid-tempo rockers fills most of the album, “Darker Days” picks it up a bit more. I think that’s the only thing I feel this album is lacking, a few more upbeat songs, but that’s just me. If you’re a core Bride fan you will enjoy this album start to finish. Standout tracks are the opener “Unbelievers”, “We Lie”, “Melting”, and “Something I Need To Know”. Always glad to get new music from these guys.

– Josh Lory



And How – More Happy Than You Think You Are
2013 Independent

And How goes heavy metal? Well, not really at all, but these songs do sound a bit heavier and more aggressive to these ears. The distinct And How sound is still present, so don’t think this is one of those extreme band

makeover kind of albums. Some songs, like “Stepping Stones” rock out nicely. Other songs, like “Heartache”, have a nice mid-paced groove. There are also several songs like “Colors” that have a nice melancholic 90s alternative sound to them. Overall, another great release from our merry band of collective artists.

– Matt Crosslin



Mike Indest – the Pretty EP
2013 Independent

Basement Tapes head honcho, deep thinker, and all around nice guy Mike Indest returns with a new EP of acoustic pop ditties. With provocative titles like “I’ll Be Your Jesus” and “You Think You’re Pretty Now”, you know you are not in for typical Top 40 radio fodder. The mood seems to be a bit more somber on this EP than some of Indest’s older outputs like Swimsuit Grandma. Mike says this is the first time in a while he has recorded with a guitar. I like the results. The other instruments are a nice touch, especially the melodica, bass guitar, and drum driven flourish a little over half way through “You Think You’re Pretty Now.” Short and to the point, as well as free – what’s not to like? See Mike’s BandCamp page to listen or download and check-out the re-mastered updated older projects of his as well.

– Matt Crosslin



Eddie Parino – That’s Me Poppin’ A String
2013 Independent

Indie DIY the way it was meant to be heard. Rough around the edges, lots of tape hiss, but catchy and enjoyable. Eddie’s voice has an interesting bit of soul in it that makes it distinct (but not in an annoying way). I dig the hint of Zeppelin in places like “U Might As Wella Told Me (Bizarre)”. Sometimes I find myself wondering what these songs would sound like as a full blown studio project with label backing. But other times I realize that the DIY feel adds a character to the songs that

is part of the overall draw. Man, the collective has been knocking ‘em out of the park.

– Matt Crosslin



Lost Orchards – Deaf Kids EP
2013 Independent

I’m having a hard time trying to figure out how to describe the genre of this EP. Try to imagine Bill Mallonee with louder guitars, and that gets a bit close to Lost Orchards. Or I guess you could say that they are an Americana Folk band that is not afraid to turn up the guitars more than most in the genre. What you can expect from these songs are heartfelt vocals combined with solid musicianship from the band. Four songs and a cool acoustic version of the EP opener “Heroin Skinny” round out this album. Fans of the sounds and artists I mentioned should give this EP a shot.

– Matt Crosslin



Dark Country – Tunes From The Darkside
2003 Independent

Sammy Horner of Electrics fame explains the album in his liner notes as such: “Things were bad...Johnny Cash had died and I was in a bad place...me and old Jimmy D were suffering from something dark and mean...we got holed up in a studio with a baritone guitar and a lot of reverb...yeah, we wrote them thar murder ballads....critics loved this dark little gem....be afraid, be very afraid...” What you have here is a dark slice of Americana mixed with a touch of Celtic Rock. Plenty of reverb and vibrato guitar tones, heavy drums, both singers are great, gritty lyricists. Songs of murder, suicide, mystery, and booze, with an underlying message of faith and love. No filler on this LP – the song writing quality you’ve come to know Sammy Horner for. Sammy’s Bandcamp is chock full of great releases, solo, the Electrics, and amazing side projects such as this one. Some of the releases on the site are “Pay What You Like” so jump on those if you’re tight on funds. Horner is well deserving of your support!

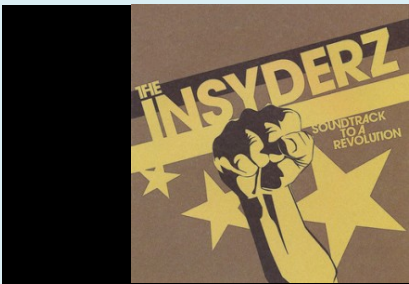
– Josh Lory



**The Distortion Mirrors – Zeros and Kings
2013 Independent**

So what do you get from a band that lists everyone from Black Sabbath to Smashing Pumpkins to Keith Green as influences? Guitar-based noisy alternative rock that is just enough 90s to be retro cool while also being enough modern to not sound dated. The band probably best describes their own sound as a “Technicolor audio roller-coaster ride through fuzzy terrain.” “Prom Queen” is an insanely catchy song with a slight 80s influence that is being streamed as a single at several sites. Go look for it and I dare you not be hooked. The second “half” of this EP finds the band getting even more progressive and experimental – our readers will probably dig this material even more. Album closer “Empyrean Dreams” is pretty trippy stuff that is almost random noise at places – a bit different than the rest but very interesting. The lyrics explore a very interesting tension between dark themes and hope, between dealing with demons and finding redemption. These guys have been gaining quite the buzz all over the interwebs it seems, so expect to hear more from this duo in the future. I know I have found a new band to keep track of.

– Matt Crosslin



**The Insyderz – Soundtrack To A Revolution
2004 Independent**

Hadn’t listened to the Insyderz since 1998’s Fight For Your Life LP. I didn’t bother to check out the two worship albums they released, may have been due to over saturation of Skacore at the time, or maybe with my ever changing musical taste, might be because I’m not a fan of praise and worship music in general. I had no idea that they released a new album in 2003, so here I am 10 years later reviewing it! Soundtrack To A Revolution is really, really, solid, beginning to end. This band sounds as tough as their home town of Detroit: great heavy guitar work, rhythm section deep in the pocket, gruff vocals, and catchy horn lines. If you liked the first two albums by Insyderz, you’ll love this one! Also

check out their outstanding 2012 Kickstarter funded release The Sinner’s Songbook while you’re over at their Bandcamp site, featuring a great duet with Reese Roper (Five Iron Frenzy) and Mojo (O.C. Supertones) on the title track.

– Josh Lory



**Secret Archives of the Vatican – Storms
2013 Independent**

Secret Archives of the Vatican has been around for a long time. Like, “since the 80s” long time. They are a bit outside of the normal type of music covered here at DTL. SAoTV specialize in electronic music mixed with ethnic instruments, rhythms, and ideas. At first you might say “So what? Hundreds of acts do just that. So are they Asian Underground, or Rai, or Arabesque, or Goan Trance, or what?” Well, yes and no. They have pretty much mixed every type of world music into their sound at one time or another. This time around the major influence is Turkish music. As a fan of world music, I love it when bands mix in ethnic influences. But I hate it when it is just a token sitar intro or a few beats on a dumbek that earns the label of “world fusion.” SAoTV are mainly electronic, but the ethnic influences are very prominent. Storms is another excellent pay-what-you-like BandCamp album (they have eight more right now). I am still hoping for re-issues of their early cassette-only albums, but there is more than enough out there right now. You can check it out for yourself – so if you are a fan of the music I described, go give them a listen.

– Matt Crosslin

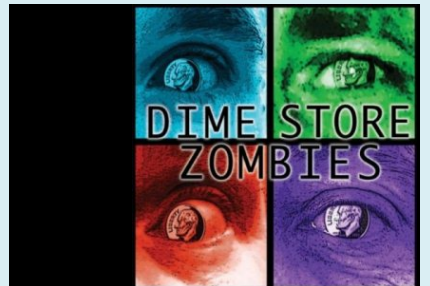


**Food for Life Ministry Benefit Compilation
2013 Thumper Punk**

Thumper Punk continues to bring the punk, this time with their second benefit compilation. I wish I knew more about some of these bands to know if these songs are available elsewhere, but I am assuming that some of them probably aren’t. As with most comps, the quality varies from song to song. But it goes to a good cause, so if you like any of the bands on here, why not grab a copy?

Some of the bands I immediately caught my ear were Platoon 1107 (with a Deliverance cover no less), False Idle, No Lost Cause, Living Fire, and LIV. But it’s not all punk – the comp ends with a few acoustic tracks and then a poetry reading. For a punk compilation, there is a lot more diversity than I thought would be on here. Proceeds go to support Food For Life Ministry, which is an organization “committed to serving those in need with food and encouragement.... Food For Life Ministry desires to care for the whole person, providing food for the body and nourishment for the soul.”

– Matt Crosslin



**Dime Store Zombies – Dime Store Zombies
2013 Independent**

I can see the movie trailer for the documentary in 20 years: “In a world... where musical talent actually mattered... bands like Dime Store Zombies would have ruled the charts...” So, the story goes that zombies ate SLIDE and they were resurrected as Dime Store Zombies. Seems like a little undead buffet action was pretty good for the soul of this band, because the re-vamped version is even better than the original. What you get on this CD are several SLIDE classics re-recorded in zombie mode along with several new songs. The sound is similar to SLIDE but at a new level with less electronic elements and more organic ones – especially guitars. Oh, and some sprinklings of horns, accordions, mandolins, and a few other random instruments. I know that sounds like experimental weirdness, but each instrument works great in the various ways they are used. The re-worked SLIDE songs might throw long-time fans for a loop – but I think you will like most changes if you give them a chance. The new songs kind of pick up where the old ones left off and keep moving forward. Lyrically, the humor and fun of SLIDE is still present, even when addressing serious subjects (their video for “Political Zombie” should prove that they have a funny bone if you miss it in the lyrics). But as usual the Zombies don’t shy away from tackling modern day problems head-on. Everything from political tensions to social media trolls to societal fakeness gets tackled head on. If there was a true “rock” music scene alive and well today, Dime Store Zombies would own it with this release. I never once wanted to hit the skip button, and I kept letting the CD start over from the beginning once it was over. Yep, it’s that good. So be sure to grab it on the 17th.

– Matt Crosslin

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BRAM COOLS
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